The Pow Wow • The Hunt • Mating Rituals • Mountain Wakes • Creek Baptisms

NOW & THEN

THE APPALACHIAN MAGAZINE

THE CENTER FOR APPALACHIAN STUDIES AND SERVICES • EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

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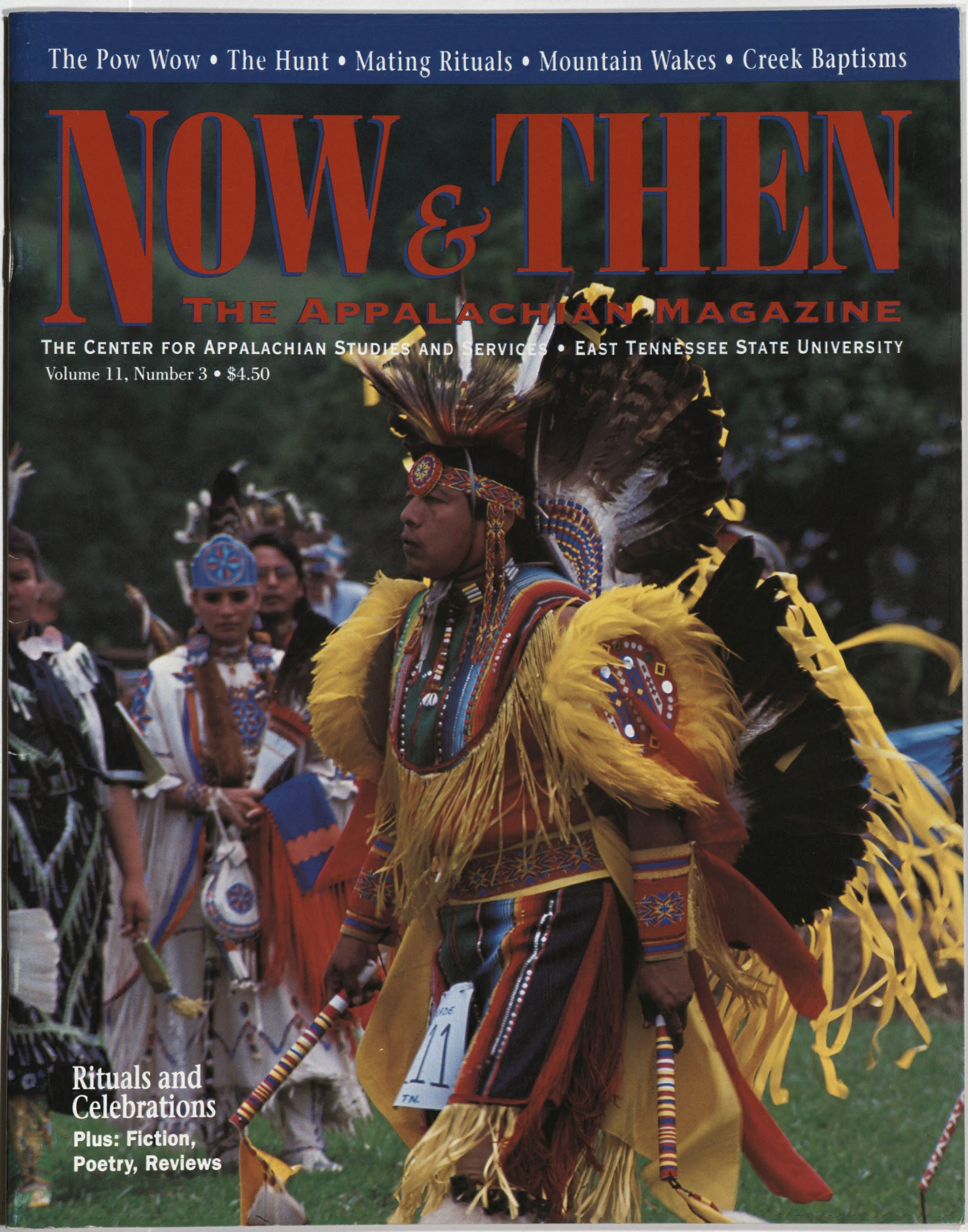

Rituals and Celebrations

Plus: Fiction, Poetry, Reviews

The Old Man Wakes Up Early

Coming suddenly awake before dawn,
he gets up, mouth dry as ashes.
He eases out to the kitchen,
dippers water down his throat and splashes his face
before he feels the coolness blowing in.

From the porch he watches the stars —
like his mother's colander turned upside-down —
but in his bones he feels the front stirring.
By nightfall it'll be here
and maybe his corn will make.
Two years out of five you lose it all,
his father had said, and break even the others.

He steps off into wet grass and through trees
with antique names — Smokehouse, Albemarle Pippin,
Sops of Wine — his grandfather's favorites:
remembering his mother's caution
about dew sores on bare feet;

how he learned to break in new shoes
by walking dew till they were soaked,
then drying them on his feet,
and the baseball glove he'd wet with dew
and tie up with a ball in it to shape the pocket;
a hayfield glittering in morning light;
silver beads sliding down a rusty wire.

He looks down at his skinny feet
and long, bony toes splayed on the damp earth,
in the moonlight, pale as clover roots.

Slowly digs them in till they disappear.
Feels himself start to grow again.

— David Black

David Black teaches at Louisa County (Va.) High School. He is poetry editor for English Journal *and was featured poet in the winter edition of* Rolling Coulter. *He has work forthcoming in* Crossroads *and* Sulphur River Literary Review.

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NOW & THEN
THE APPALACHIAN MAGAZINE

"The quality of life is not measured by length but by the fullness with which we enter into each present moment."
— favorite Native American saying of Belinda Mason, quoted by Artie Ann Bates in A Gathering at the Forks *(1993)*

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The Power of Ritual

When I think of ritual and celebration in Appalachia, I think of the summer of my 15th birthday, when I took a two-day-a-week waitressing job at my Aunt Ola's establishment, Rush's Restaurant. The year was 1965. The restaurant was smack in the middle of downtown Jonesborough, Tenn. (There's a gift shop there now.) As I worked, I often spied my father chatting with other businessmen on the sidewalk outside the restaurant's doors. And I was comforted by his ritual.

On the job, one of my primary duties was to wipe all seats and tables with an ammonia solution. As I hauled my bucket from booth to booth, I took the time — in the quiet of the empty room — to calm myself before the noonday rush. As I worked, I recited the 23rd Psalm: "The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want...."

I thought the language was beautiful, and it gave me a sense of inner peace. It was, in effect, my own personal ritual.

That same summer, near the end of June as the days began to stretch endlessly in long, vibrant ripples of green, my father died. It happened suddenly and cruelly, as though a jackhammer had been taken to my heart. On my second day back at work, I had begun, as usual, to wipe the yellow vinyl and the stained, formica tables. My eyes moved outside beyond the double doors, where I glimpsed at a familiar form. I smiled to myself, then felt a stab of overwhelming sadness. In that instant, I thought I'd seen my father, then realized, just as quickly, that it was someone else — someone with the same build and balding head.

I turned slowly back to my wiping, comforted by ritual: "The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want...."

I share this story, because it reflects the power of ritual in all our lives. No where in America will you see a greater appreciation for rituals and celebrations than in the Appalachian community. And in this special issue of *Now & Then*, we've tried to cover the gamut with articles by Howard Dorgan, Doyle Bickers, James Crissman, and Charlotte Deskins, all of whom discuss specific and long-standing rituals. Jane Woodside's piece, on the other hand, examines a more recent festive experience — the Pow Wow. We conclude with Anne Leibig's personal account of becoming a celebrant within the Appalachian community.

It's my hope that the words contained here create a newfound appreciation for the colorful, celebratory spirit of all Appalachians — for it is indeed exuberant and truly special.

— Jill Oxendine, guest editor

TRUE 'CUE

Pig split,
Fire lit,
Slaw fixed,
Sauce mixed.
Coals glow,
Roast slow.
Now eat:
Pick meat,
Hush pup,
Drink up.
Gut big.
Good pig.

— Bruce Tindall

Earl Palmer, from The Appalachian Photographs of Earl Palmer, *by Jean Haskell Speer, 1990*

In this 1950 photo, a group of women in Patrick County, Va., take time out from cracking walnuts for a potluck lunch — country fried chicken and baked ham, deviled eggs and pickled beets, and enough pies and cakes to stock a bakery.

Bruce Tindall is co-author of Did Mohawks Wear Mohawks? *(1991) and* How Does Olive Oil Lose Its Virginity? *(forthcoming). A computer programmer, he lives near Raleigh, N.C.*

Prognosticators, Slugburgers, and Other Tales of Appalachian Celebrations

by Jill Oxendine

In the weeks prior to Groundhog Day, in Punxsutawney, Penn., the local post office is buzzing with activity.

Sue Pavick, a Chamber of Commerce representative, says it's all that mail coming in for Phil. "People want to know what the weather's going to be like after February 2," she said. "This year, with all the snow — people were even blaming Phil."

Phil is Punxsutawney's resident groundhog, and he has developed quite a reputation when it comes to Groundhog Day and weather prognostications.

Groudhog meteorology has quite a long history there in Punxsutawney, dating back to the early German settlers and their observance of Candlemas Day. Tradition holds that if the sun shines on February 2, an animal will cast a shadow and six more weeks of bad weather will follow.

Because there were so many groundhogs in Pennsylvania, the early settlers proclaimed these animals extremely wise — and the only true weather predictors for Candlemas.

By the early 1880s, some townspeople had begun trekking into the woods to celebrate the talents of groundhogs. A few years later, this group had become known as the Punxsutawney Groundhog Club. That was over 100 years ago, and the club still exists today. In fact, some of its members, called the Inner Circle, stage the Groundhog ceremonies now held annually atop Gobbler's Knob.

Over the years, these tongue-in-cheek ceremonies have become highly ritualistic. On February 2, several thousand people gather in the early hours to witness Phil's emergence and official prediction. (Never mind that his real home is in a Groundhog Zoo somewhere in downtown Punxsutawney.) The ritual begins with the Inner Circle's president tapping on Phil's "burrow door" three times with an acacia cane. An "official handler" then pulls Phil from his den, holds him aloft for onlookers, then proceeds to converse with the groundhog in groundhogese — a language of winks and grunts — that is translated into the official forecast.

The prediction is then read — in rhymed verse — to an anxiously awaiting crowd. "Phil has never made a wrong prediction," said Pavick.

Courtesy of Punxsutawney Spirit

Punxsutawney Phil is held aloft by Bill Deeley, "official handler," Groundhog Day, 1994.

The Punxsutawney celebration is one of the oldest and most famous in the nation. But when I began researching this article, I was astounded at the number and variety of other celebrations that occur just in the Appalachian region. There didn't need to be much of a reason, it seemed, for things to turn festive. A thought or comment, an indigenous food, a local joke, a bit of history, a song, a name, a legend could all be catalysts for celebration.

For example, take Corinth, Miss. If you go there and order a hamburger, you're likely to get a variation on the theme — the slugburger. This is a concoction of beef and pork trimmings mixed with soybean, which is deep fried and served up on a bun with pickles, onions, and mustard.

Slugburgers originated in Corinth during the Depression when people couldn't afford ground beef. The name "slug" is a play on the word "plug" (meaning fake) — as in plug nickel.

In 1987, when the Downtown Corinth Association began looking for ways to revitalize the economy, they decided to hold a Slugburger Festival. "It started as a joke," said Debbie Adams. "We were looking for ways to raise money, and someone said, 'What we ought to do is have a slugburger festival and let somebody like Alka-Seltzer sponsor it.'"

This drew a laugh, and the rest is history.

The first year, only a few hundred people came, but by 1991, the event had become one of the best-attended in Mississippi, drawing between 30,000 and 35,000 people over three days.

With varying activities offered, such as a bungee jump and slugburger toss, the festival continues to bring in the crowds — and the T-shirts sell like hot cakes.

Besides a location's indigenous wares, specific past events can also be a cause for celebration and a source of pride. In the small community in Mansfield, Penn., the "event" was the first football game ever played at night — using electrical lighting. The game was played between Wyoming Seminary and Mansfield State Normal School (Mansfield University) on September 28, 1892.

The original idea, said public relations director Dennis Miller, was to celebrate the 100th anniversary of that game by having a weekend geared to the 1890s.

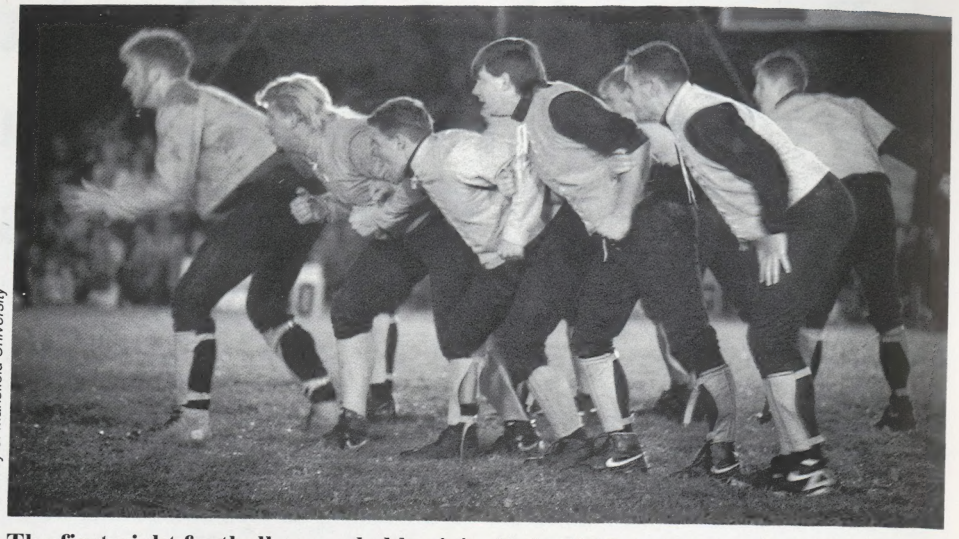
Research about that 1892 ball game, however, revealed some intriguing information. It seems Mansfield Normal School had organized a football team in 1891, and, to get publicity, the team decided to play a game at the Great Mansfield Fair. Because baseball dominated the fair's daylight hours, the football game was relegated to the evening. Although Mansfield wouldn't get electricity for another five years, General Electric agreed to provide lights for the clash using a 4,300-pound generator. This provided the juice for five lights on a pole for the middle of the field and 20 more bulbs strung on the grandstand.

Because the history was so interesting, Miller decided to approach General Electric for sponsorship and got surprising results. "They not only helped sponsor the event," he noted, "but they wanted to create a TV commercial that featured the reenactment."

This was a major boon because GE ended up creating props for the commercial, which included replica 1890s footballs and uniforms for the players.

The props are now used for the reenactments, which are played by the university's Alpha Chi Rho fraternity. In fact, everything is duplicated — right down to the old rules of the game, which included no passing, helmets, or tackling below the belt.

The event and the GE television commercial, which goes international this year, have done wonders for Mansfield morale — particularly in terms of national recognition. The first year alone, the Fabulous 1890s Weekend, was covered by The Associated Press, *Sports Illustrated*, ABC, CNN, NBC, ESPN, and *The Washington Post*.



Courtesy of Mansfield University

The first night football game, held originally in 1892, is reenacted in Mansfield, Penn., at the Fabulous 1890s Weekend.

But the biggest benefit is increased community pride, said Miller. "The first year we got some of our players and a local historian and went around to the high schools. We told the young people, 'You should be proud that this event took place here.' I think that was the first time they had heard that, instead of: 'You're out in the sticks.'"

Sometimes the motivation behind a celebration goes beyond dollars and cents — to filling a community need. Chet Hoag, who owns a restaurant in Sugar Tit, S.C., says their annual festival, called a BubbaFest, has a mission: to change the image of the Bubba. The event features a Bubba-Q cook-off, a Bubbalympics, and the selection of the BubbaFest Bubba and Bubbette.

"The name Bubba is an endearing term," Hoag said, "but in the South, it's more derogatory, as in 'redneck' or 'country bumpkin.' We decided we were going to change all that."

So how can the Bubba image be changed? Through education, of course. All BubbaFest proceeds go to technical education scholarships for the young people of upstate South Carolina. "One of the critical needs for our area," said Hoag, "is to have more technically educated young people who can be absorbed into the (local) job market."

A profusion of new industries in upstate South Carolina, including a new BMW site, has created a newfound appreciation for the Sugar Tit work force. "We decided the Bubba was the individual who had brought that prosperity to the area, and the main reason for all these companies coming in," Hoag continued.

The emphasis on education is something of a personal crusade for the restaurateur, whose work with local at-risk youngsters convinced him that modern-day public education needs an update. He calls the festival a "fun way" to get the message across and to help kids who wouldn't ordinarily get a chance to be productive.

When Sugar Tit held its first BubbaFest in 1993, about 3,000 people attended. Keep in mind that Sugar Tit's population is only about 150. The BubbaFest name drew major media attention — with coverage by over 100 radio stations, *Paul Harvey at Noon*, and the Cable News Network. The main rewards, however, won't be in the national recognition but in the better-educated work force that will likely result for upstate South Carolina.

Throughout Appalachia, people love to celebrate, and often it's for no other reason than to connect one human being to another. Recently, I saw an ad for the Second Annual Race Unity Day Celebration, which was held June 12, 1994, in Jonesville, Virginia.

I was intrigued.

Jonesville is a small town in Southwest Virginia, and I couldn't help but

wonder: Just how many different races could possibly live in Jonesville? I quickly located a phone number and was soon chatting with Bahman Payman, one of the event's organizers. I learned that he, an obstetrician, and his wife, Sorour, were from Iran, having escaped that country following the Shah's overthrow in 1979. Because they practiced the Baha'i Faith, they left Iran to escape persecution and possible death.

Today, the Paymans have a good life in Southwest Virginia, where they're members of the Appalachian African American Historical Cultural and Community Development Center. This is a former black school house in Lee County, Va., that is now a museum and community center.

It was Payman, a member of the center's board of directors, who, in 1993, proposed that a Race Unity Day be held as part of a national observance begun in 1957 by the United States National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is.

The event, which was sponsored by the center, the Lee County School Board, and area churches and businesses, drew about 150 people its first year. This year, that number rose to 400. People came to enjoy the multicultural fellowship, singing, speeches, and food.

James A. Williams, president and publisher of Wayfarer Publications of Roanoke, delivered the keynote address. He implored the audience not to underestimate the event's significance. The historians of the future, he said, will be looking back through time searching for the builders of brotherhood, and they will discover the crowd of people who gathered that June day in Jonesville.

Now that's something to celebrate.

Jill Oxendine of Johnson City, Tenn., is a writer for The Tombras Group and is the editor of Storytelling Magazine *published by the National Storytelling Association. She is guest editor for this issue of* Now & Then.

THOUGHTS ON A CELEBRATION IN JONESVILLE

Editor's Note: Sorour and Bahman Payman and their two children, all of whom belong to the Baha'i Faith, were forced to flee religious persecution imposed by Iran's Islamic Revolution of 1979. In this essay, Sorour relates her heartfelt wishes for a united humanity after attending the Second Annual Race Unity Day held June 12, 1994, in Jonesville, Va. The event is sponsored by the Appalachian African American Historical Cultural and Community Development Center. The site, before racial integration in the United States, was a one-room school for black children. Today, it is a community center that strives to preserve and encourage cultural diversity in Appalachia.

When I think about my sisters, brothers, and friends in Iran who are treated with utmost humiliation, with no rights to employment or higher education, with no rights to gather for prayers or religious services, I feel a deep sense of shame and sadness. My co-religionists are good people, they believe in the unity of God, unity of all divine religions, and unity of humankind. This is the Baha'i Faith.

Have I lost hope in human goodness? Of course not.

When I attended the Second Annual Race Unity Day Celebration held June 12, 1994, at Cumberland Bowl Park in Jonesville, I came home feeling uplifted and resolute in my commitment to unity. I was so pleased to see such a great turnout of people, all happy to be together.

I picture the future as glorious. I see the next generation busily cutting down the thick walls of religious intolerance in Iran. It will be a world where racial separation is forgotten and unbridled nationalism has given way to a wider loyalty — to the love of humanity as a whole. In this world, inordinate disparity between rich and poor will be solved by the combined application of spiritual, moral, and practical approaches. In this world, every child will receive the same quality education. I foresee one international auxiliary language taught throughout the world, bringing all people closer and improving understanding.

I realize and see clearly that the foundation of that not-so-distant united and peaceful future is being prepared by sufferings and sacrifices in Iran and elsewhere, and by such gatherings as the Race Unity Day Celebration.

I feel confident that racism will end, but not without me.

— Sorour Payman

Powell Valley News, Pennington Gap, Va.

Children taking part in the Race Unity Day celebrations in Jonesville, Va.

Celebrations in Appalachia

Here is a selected list *(in no way comprehensive)* of some of Appalachia's most compelling events. Confirm information before attending.

Alabama

•First Monday Trade Days in Scottsboro; monthly event (first Monday of each month and the preceding Sunday); one of the Deep South's oldest and largest trade day events; 205-259-5500.

•Alabama June Jam Festival in Fort Payne; June; annual benefit concert, hosted by the group, ALABAMA, is a ten-day festival that donates its profits to charity; 205-845-9300.

•Blueberry Festival in Lineville; July; arts and crafts, exhibits, blueberry treats; 205-396-2828.

•W.C. Handy Music Festival in Florence and surrounding area; August; week-long celebration of the musical heritage of W.C. Handy, "Father of the Blues;" 205-766-7642.

•Arab Community Fair in Arab; September; see period demonstrations of tools and activities, such as butter making and farming in Arab's restored 1911 church and 1935 school; 205-586-3138.

Georgia

•Fasching Karnival in Helen; end of January-first of February; a German-style "Mardi Gras" with themed costume parties in different restaurants around town, a parade, and a prince and princess; 706-878-2181.

•Indian Dinner and Indian Heritage Day in Clayton; April; an enchanting evening of authentic Native American food, music, and dancing, with a festival the next day featuring deerskin curing, storytelling, finger weaving, etc.; 404-473-0197.

•Southern Appalachian Sampler in Blue Ridge; April-September; storytelling, clogging, shape-note singing, music; 706-492-3819.

•Annual Steam Engine Festival in Cumming; July; steam engine parade, arts and crafts, gospel and country music, clogging; 404-889-0309.

•Rock City's Fairy Tale Festival in Lookout Mountain; August; three weekends of clowns, fairy tale characters, puppets, and other family entertainment; 706-820-2531.

Kentucky

•Hillbilly Days in Pikeville; April; more than 60,000 people celebrate the history and culture of Appalachia with mountain music, crafts, and square dancing; 800-844-7453.

•Mountain Mushroom Festival in Irvine; end of April-first of May; mountain crafts, music, and mushroom contests; call 606-723-2556.

•Coal Digger Days in Hardy; May; a festival to honor coal miners, with lots of free fried chicken; 606-456-4785.

•Knott County Gingerbread Festival in Hindman; September; the local tradition of distributing gingerbread on election day is remembered with gingerbread baking and eating contests and the world's largest gingerbread man; 606-785-5544.

•Mary Breckinridge Festival in Hyden; October; named for the founder of the Frontier Nursing Service, the festival offers mountain crafts, a lumberjack competition, a quilt show, etc.; 606-672-2344.

Maryland

•National Pike Festival in Washington, Garrett, and Allegany Counties; May; covers a larger geographic region than any other festival and celebrates the creation of the National Pike, the road that opened the way to the settlement of the Midwest; 800-228-7829.

•Iron Mountain Stringfest in Cumberland; June; square dance and cakewalk, acoustic bluegrass competition with fiddle, banjo, mandolin; 301-722-3027.

•C&O Canal Boat Festival in Cumberland; July; arts, crafts, reenactments of life in 1800s, canal boat replica tours, interpretive tours of the restored canal locks and lockhouse; 301-729-3136.

•Rocky Gap Music Festival at Rocky Gap State Park; August; top country and bluegrass artists perform at a three-day festival; 301-724-2511.

•Christopher Columbus Festival in Cumberland; September; Italian festival, music, food, etc.; 301-725-3773.

Mississippi

•Gumtree Festival in Tupelo; May; festival features an original music songwriter competition; 800-533-0611.

•Heritage Day in Iuka; June; crafts, music, and a Trail of Tears reenactment; 601-423-9933.

•Kudzu Festival in Holly Springs; July; Bar-B-Q cook-off, arts and crafts, carnival entertainment; 601-252-2943.

•Sawmill Festival in Bruce; July; street dances, arts and crafts, motorcycle show, 10K run; 601-983-2222.

•Slugburger Festival in Corinth; July; carnival, arts and crafts, "Hillbilly Express" train, games; 601-287-1550.

•Possum Town Pigfest in Columbus; September; a huge Bar-B-Q contest in which the winners go on to compete in Memphis in May; 601-328-4532 or 800-327-2686.

•Blackhills Festival in Starkhill; end of September-first of October; a celebration of Mississippi music and culture including reggae, rhythm and blues; 601-323-5321.

New York

•Ice Castle Extravaganza and Winter Fest in Mayville; February; snow-related activities and fireworks; 716-753-4304.

•Tulip Festival in Clymer; May; hundreds of tulips, residents in Dutch costume, parade, antique tractor show; 716-355-6306.

•Two Rivers Ethnic Festival in Binghamton; May; foods, dance, music and culture of China, Greece, Pakistan, Lithuania, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Ukraine; 607-723-9419.

•Iroquois Indian Festival at New Schoharie Indian Museum in Howes Cave; Labor Day Weekend; features arts and crafts, dance and storytelling, lacrosse games; 518-234-4691.

•Annual Apple Festival in Newark Valley; October; features heritage craft demonstrations, apple-based foods and crafts, Civil War encampment; 607-642-9516.

North Carolina

•Black Mountain Herbfest in Black Mountain; May; variety of herb events; 704-669-7159.

•Ramp Festival in Waynesville; May; bluegrass music, square dancing, etc.; 704-456-8691.

•North Carolina Rhododendron Festival in Bakersville; June; festival honoring the bloom of the mountain rhododendron features golf tournaments, pageants, road races, entertainment; 704-765-9483.

•Grandfather Mountain Highland Games in Linville; July; a celebration of Scottish heritage featuring traditional dancing, a fiddling contest, and thousands of visitors; 704-733-1333.

•North Carolina International Folk Festival: Folkmoot, USA in Waynesville; end of July-first of August; international dancing and music; 704-452-2997.

•Waldensian Festival in Valdese; August; crafts, historic displays, etc.; 704-879-2129.

•Annual Woolly Worm Festival in Banner Elk; October; crafts, food, entertainment; 704-898-5605.

Ohio

•Wild Turkey Festival in McArthur; May; celebrate wild turkey hunting season with a parade, rides, games, and a turkey calling contest; 614-596-5033.

•Feast of the Flowering Moon in Chillicothe; Memorial Day; Native American dancing, crafts and vendors; 614-775-0900.
•Ohio Tobacco Festival in Ripley; August; tobacco displays, spitting contest, bed race, square dancing; 513-378-4784.
•Paul Bunyan Festival in Nelsonville; October; lumberjack competitions, chain saw sculpturing, nail driving contests, etc.; 614-753-3591.
•Switzerland of Ohio Black Walnut Festival in Woodsfield; October; lumberjack contest, nail driving contest, horseshoe tournament, black walnut foods and crafts; 614-472-5499.

Pennsylvania

•Groundhog Day in Punxsutawney; February; America's premier weather forecaster makes his famous annual prediction; 814-938-7700.
•Snake Hunt and Rattlesnake Sacking Contest in Cross Fork; June; snake hunting in the mountains, sacking contest, and crafts; 717-923-1428.
•Bark Peelers Convention in Galeton; July; contests, music, sawmill, demonstrations, crafts, antique engines; 814-435-2652.
•Red Suspender Weekend in Galeton; July; parade, water battles, food, live music, fireworks; 814-435-2265.
•Swedish Festival in Mt. Jewett; August; Kinzua Bridge historical attraction; 814-778-9944.
•Fabulous 1890s Weekend in Mansfield; September; recreation of America's first night football game; 717-662-3442 or 717-662-4846.
•Ukrainian Festival in Pittsburgh; September; Ukrainian jewelry, needlework, ceramics, leatherwork plus evening dance performance; 412-624-6000 or 412-624-6150.

South Carolina

•Mighty Moo Festival in Cowpens; June; the people of Cowpens put on a festival for a reunion of crewmen who served on the USS Cowpens during World War II; 806-463-3201.
•Bubbafest in Sugar Tit; September; Bubba-Q Cookoff, Bubbalympics, and a Bubba Look-alike contest; 803-596-5202.
•South Carolina Apple Festival in Westminster; September; this community celebrates its apple crop with apple orchard tours, a road race, whitewater rafting; 806-647-5316.
•Farm City Celebration in Spartanburg; October; sheep-shearing, soap-making, emphasizing ties between urban and rural communities; 803-596-2993.
•Pumpkin Festival in Pumpkintown; October; Bar-B-Q, arts and crafts, fiddling, clogging; 803-878-2045.

Tennessee

•African Cultural Ball in Chattanooga; February; African attire, authentic food dishes, dance, and music, to commemorate the efforts of the African American Museum; 615-267-1076.
•The Wool Gathering at Misty Hollow Farm in Beech Grove; April; sheep shearing, spinning, weaving, knitting, etc.; 615-394-2487.
•Annual Tennessee Strawberry Festival in Dayton; May; world's longest strawberry shortcake, kids' fair, parade, food, arts and crafts; 615-775-0361.
•Tennessee Annual Poke Sallet Festival in Gainesboro; May; poke eating contest, crosscut saw contest, Miss Poke Sallet beauty pageant; 615-268-3447 or 615-268-9440.
•Annual Rhododendron Festival at Roan Mountain; June; festival focuses on the largest natural rhododendron gardens in the United States, with arts and crafts, music, and wildlife tours; 615-772-4422.
•Old Timers Day in Doyle; June; old-fashioned attire, tall tales, husband calling, hog calling, and cake walks; 615-836-3921.
•Trade Days Festival in Trade; June; music, mountain arts, Civil War reenactments, pow-wows; 615-727-5800.
•Folk Medicine Festival in Red Boiling Springs; July; learn about folk medicine with folk heritage demonstrations, music, arts and crafts; 615-699-2104.

Virginia

•Highland County Maple Festival in Highland County; March; one of the southernmost maple festivals in the country, featuring tours of area maple farms, buckwheat pancakes, a maple queen, etc.; 703-468-2550.
•Best Friend Festival in Norton; June; celebrating Southwest Virginia's most valuable resource — people; 703-679-0961.
•Virginia Highlands Festival in Abingdon; end of July-first of August; festival designed to preserve Appalachian heritage, featuring antique market, creative writing, wine tasting, hot air balloons, etc.; 703-676-2282.

The Galax Fiddlers Convention began in 1935 as a local event, drawing about 1,000 people each year for the first few years. During the folk music revival of the 1960s, college students discovered the convention, and the event was bringing in over 9,000 people by 1965. Now, with over 2,000 contestants, the Fiddler's Convention attracts nearly 40,000 people from around the world.

•Old Time Fiddlers Convention in Galax; August; oldest and largest event of its kind in the nation, with competitions in clogging, old time and bluegrass music, folk music, and flatfoot dancing; 703-236-8541.
•Dock Boggs Festival in Wise; September; one of the oldest surviving music festivals that still features old-time music, bluegrass, etc.; 703-679-2632.

West Virginia

•Fasnacht in Helvetia; Saturday before Mardi Gras; a Swiss heritage celebration with a masked ball; 304-924-6435.
•West Virginia Dandelion Festival in White Sulphur Springs; Memorial Day weekend; dandelion greens, wine, arts and crafts; 304-645-1000 or 800-284-9440.
•Pearl S. Buck Birthday Celebration in Hillsboro; late June; honors the state's most celebrated author with cake, live music, and theater; 304-653-4430.
•Sternwheel Regatta Festival in Charleston; late August-early September; entertainment, contests, exhibits, parades, sternwheel paddleboat races, rubber duck race; 304-348-6419.

The Charleston Sternwheel Regatta Festival is one of West Virginia's largest festivals, held annually since 1971 on the Kanawha River. The festival lasts about 10 days and draws about 400,000 people.

•Stonewall Jackson Heritage Arts and Crafts Jubilee in Weston; Labor Day weekend; the Civil War general's homeplace hosts mountain arts, crafts, music, games, Civil War battle reenactments; 304-269-1863 or 800-296-1863.
•West Virginia Italian Heritage Festival in Clarksburg; Labor Day weekend; foods, pageantry, Italian games, parades; 304-622-7314.
•Bridge Day at the New River Gorge Bridge in Fayetteville; October; jumpers parachute 876 feet from the New River Gorge Bridge, the world's longest single-arch span, to the riverbank below; 304-465-5617.
•Mountain State Forest Festival in Elkins; October; state's oldest festival offers mountain arts and crafts, music, and the Governor crowns the Queen; 304-636-1824.

— Compiled by Melanie K. Hutsell

Melanie K. Hutsell, from Kingsport, Tenn., is a summer intern at Now & Then *and an English major at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She has published in* The Sow's Ear *and* Free Spirit *and has written several novels, all of them unpublished.*

NAMING: FAMILY RITUAL OR GENETIC PREDISPOSITION?

by Heidi Hartwiger

How a grandfather's naming ritual enriched one woman's life and times beyond Gypsy Pond.

In my family, we name everything.

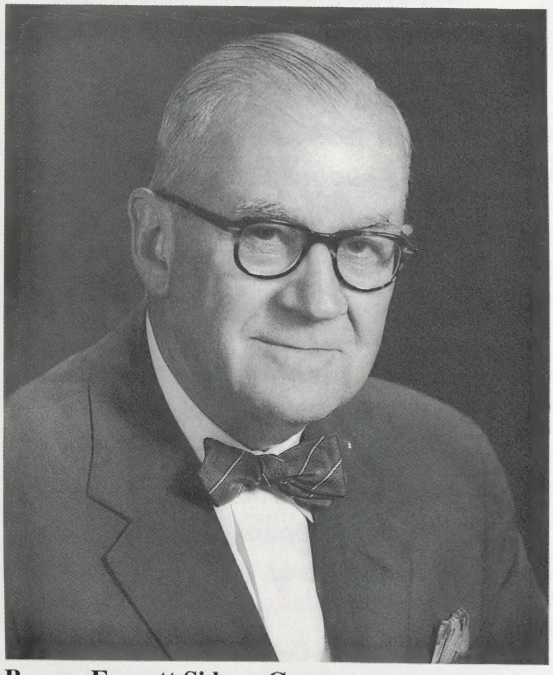
This ritual should not be confused with children's backyard name calling or considered a replacement for christening ceremonies where babies are named before God. No, it appears our naming of events, items, everyone and everything is one of those mysteriously inherent, genetic things like migration.

As a result, this ritual of naming, which is always accompanied by richly embellished stories, tends to create and preserve unique individual identities.

It also serves various purposes, such as helping us recognize our boundaries — where we belong and where we don't. As children, for example, we knew our boundary was what my grandfather called Three Mile Fence. Whether it was three miles long or three miles from the farm house was immaterial. We weren't to go beyond Three Mile Fence.

On occasion, naming can also break tension, ease apprehension, or create an inner sense of well-being when a situation indicates otherwise. One afternoon late in September as I drove through fog and driving rain, I followed a flat bed truck down from the mountains towards my coastal home.

Why I named that truck the Son of Perdition eludes me. Perhaps it was the irritating manner in which a corner of black canvas protruded from the flat bed and flapped in the wind. When I tried to focus on the road, I soon found myself noting the deteriorating weather or the ominous and flapping Son of Perdition. So I turned my attention to my mountain treasure, a handmade dulcimer resting in its case beside me. It was clear — I must name her Dora. I smiled, comforted by ritual.



Bapoo, Everett Sidney Greer.

My Bapoo and Gypsy Pond

The master of all namers, my grandfather, called the land he loved and worked Frog Hollow Farm. Everett Sidney Greer was his given name, but to me, the eldest of nine grandchildren, he was my "Bapoo."

In my family of origin and later in my family of procreation, we each developed strong senses of place, tradition, and personal identity. Now as adults, we individually and collectively continue to demonstrate our love and respect for the land.

I credit this to my grandfather's naming ritual. Soon after each baby was born and before any church baptism, he saw that the infant was placed upon the earth and introduced by name to the land.

As we sat together long ago in his stuffed chair listening to Liszt's Hungarian rhapsodies, my Bapoo told me stories of gypsies, whom he named

Rinaldo and Charita. We also named the farm pond in Salt Lick pasture Gypsy Pond, and it was my place. Many Sunday afternoons through changing seasons, I sat by my Gypsy Pond, hoping that Rinaldo and Charita, undaunted by Three Mile Fence, would whisk me away in their gypsy wagon to a life of campfires, tea leaves, and golden earrings.

A geographical anomaly visible from Gypsy Pond was a hill that my Bapoo named Hold On To Your Back Teeth Hill. It was the last big hill on the main road just before turning onto our gravel lane. My personal initiation into the ritual of naming came one summer as I studied activity on Hold On To Your Back Teeth Hill. I often saw a man on a red bicycle. The urge to name pulsed in my veins, pounded in my heart. It was clear from the way the man angled and strained over the handlebars that he could have no other name but "Bender."

And so it was from then forward.

The Sidney Legacy

Whether I walked the fence line with him, rode the tractor fender as he plowed, or sat in the stuffed chair beside him, I heard my Bapoo's stories about our family names and how one name, my name, played an important role in our family history. You see, like my grandfather, my name is Sidney Greer — and so is my mother's name Sidney Greer. In our family, the first born of a Sidney is named Sidney. And it has been so since the 16th century in Scotland.

It was natural that some confusion ensued when, during World War II, the three of us lived under the same roof. To simplify matters, my mother, taking into account my love for the land, and my grandfather, then influenced by Johanna Spyri's book *Heidi,* decided to give me a nickname. I became Heidi.

I didn't love goats or live in a thatch-roof house, but I did enjoy cheese sandwiches on dark bread and wearing layers of clothes. In my mind's eye, I met the criteria to be Heidi. But what of my Sidney self? I vowed to always remember "the brave cousins," as my Bapoo called them, the Scottish Sidneys who lived and died in the motherland. Surely, I concluded, the brave cousins must have known Lorna Doone, defied the crown with Rob Roy, and had tea with Sir Walter Scott.

Sometime during the 1960s, I forgot the brave cousins, left the land, the stories, and the naming rituals, thinking of nothing but to escape West Virginia.

Sometime during the 1960s, I forgot the brave cousins, left the land, the stories, and the naming rituals, thinking of nothing but to escape West Virginia. I married and moved to flat, coastal Virginia. When the first of my four children was born, tradition or possibly instinct reunited me with my lifelong friend, the land. In my Bapoo's way, I introduced each baby to the earth.

I knew I had my grandfather's blood, as I adapted and retold family stories for my children. They listened, observed, and increased their repertoire of family stories. It didn't take many visits to West Virginia for me to realize my children had inherited the naming instinct as they scouted landmarks and recounted the stories that prompted naming on previous trips. They looked for illustrious places, such as Dead Cow House, Junk Car Hill, and Throw-up Bridge, as mileposts to Gran's.

Heidi Hartwiger (nee Sidney Greer Maness) and her mother, Sidney Greer Maness, 1945.

Although we busily named our passages through life, I felt something was missing. Finally, awaiting the birth of my third child, I understood I wasn't Heidi — I was a Sidney who had not yet borne a Sidney. But it wasn't too late.

Matthew Sidney was born with a smile on his face. We traveled 500 miles so my Bapoo could nestle bright-eyed, smiling Matthew Sidney in his arms. During our visit, Bapoo's friendly but patronizing nurse suggested that we weren't likely to get a response. I touched my Bapoo's warm hands. The same hands that once had held me as I peeked into birds' nests now cradled Matthew Sidney. His hands, my link with the past and guide to the future, caressed my baby's little toes and chubby face. My Bapoo grinned as the baby grabbed and gummed his forefinger. My grandfather winked at me and smiled at my mother.

Finally, he looked at the nurse and gently, graciously said, "Four Sidneys."

Heidi Hartwiger of Yorktown, Va., has become her family's official collector of rituals, traditions, and stories. A former reporter, she now teaches 11th-grade English at York High in Yorktown. Her books include A Gift of Herbs *and* All Join Hands, *both published by Down Home Press.*

Liquid Graves and Dripping Saints

by Howard Dorgan

Total-immersion baptisms are still being carried out on many glistening waterways in Appalachia. Here's some of the history.

Go into all the world and baptize. That's what Jesus said. We believe he meant in natural water, because that's where he was baptized. We come to this creek, and it's the River Jordan. We dip a brother into this water, and it's like a liquid grave. Into this little creek goes a dead sinner. From it rises a live and dripping saint.

— Brother Roscoe Greene of Deep Gap, N.C., Mount Paran Missionary Baptist, August 12, 1978

With these words, Preacher Roscoe Greene expresses the rich depth and symbolism of creek baptisms. For him, these natural water immersions represent a purifying of the soul, a sacrament decreed by Biblical ordinance, and a down-through-the-ages connection with the waters of River Jordan.

New Christians have been immersed in outdoor "liquid graves" and ceremoniously raised again as "dripping saints" for many centuries. Today, natural water baptisms are still actively practiced in plain-folk Christian communities wherever traditionalism prevails. But they are found especially in the South — and particularly in Central Appalachia — where the "old fashion way" is given special reverence.

Baptismal Settings

Creek baptisms can be seen on spring mornings in the mist-covered waters of Dismal River, a Virginia tributary to Levisa Fork of Big Sandy. And they can be observed on summer Sunday afternoons at the North Fork of New River in Ashe County, N.C. Others occur near Mayking, Kentucky, in Bottom Fork and at streams of the three-forked Holston River network in North Carolina, Virginia, and Tennessee.

Occasionally, they conclude the Old Regular Baptist Smith Family Memorial, held beside Straton Fork of Meathouse Creek, a tributary of Tug River. It was, in fact, at this latter location that I once witnessed Raymond Smith, an Old Regular Baptist elder of Canada, Ky., lift a "dripping saint" from water more suitable for wading than for immersions. In a 1989 interview, he told me: "We dam up a spot. I can do with 18 to 20 inches of water, as long as the brother or sister ain't too big. We want a-going all the way under."

Indeed, every stream in Central Appalachia — as long as it isn't contaminated by mine run-off or other pollutants —

Howard Dorgan

A "dripping saint" as he emerged from the North Fork of New River in Ashe County, N.C., in August 1989.

Howard Dorgan

A baptism as it was conducted by the Thornton Freewill Baptist Church in June 1990, at the Bottom Fork in Mayking, Ky.

could be a site for this rite-of-wetness. The requirements are simple: The location needs to be accessible, preferably with places for viewing (such as an overarching bridge), and contain enough water for immersing the whole body. Adequate space is also needed for at least three people, two of whom will perform the baptism. Two people are needed because intense emotions occasionally stimulate a highly physical response from the baptized. Finally, the entry to the stream should be clear and gently sloping, so that older or infirm adults can enter safely and easily.

The Creek Rituals

Six liturgical steps comprise the ritual of baptism. These include the gathering, surveying of the spot, water entry, immersion, emotional response, and creek-side towel communion.

The Gathering. In 1991, Brother Dean Fields of Letcher County, Ky., described to me the communal nature of the creek baptism: "There's great joy for church folk when they see a-going down to the water. We laugh; we cry; we sing; and we shout. We want a day that'll be remembered." The joy comes from the celebratory spirit of the baptized, as well as from the people at creek side — the family, friends, church members, and interested observers. Everyone is there to experience this symbolic redeeming of a soul, this joining of a brother or sister to a spiritual fellowship. It is, in fact, quite a joyous event.

Typically, there's singing and praying, sometimes a spontaneous testimonial, and occasionally the shouting that Brother Fields mentioned. Laughter is mixed with tears and hugs, and congratulatory remarks are abundant. Older folks are also known to compare their own memories of immersion, some of which probably occurred in the exact spot. The cumulative effect is the creation of memories, "a day that'll be remembered," as Fields put it, with the place, date, persons doing the baptizing, and faces of those present forever engrained in recollection.

The Surveying. The surveying involves the baptism's planning and site preparation. Because the creek has likely changed since the last baptism, the preacher must first wade into the water to scout out the best spot for the immersion. During this process, the church men are heavily involved, discussing the water level, pointing out hazards, and commenting on the line of backward plunge. Past baptisms, when the water was this or that, are usually recalled.

Meanwhile, the women chat between the soft singing of hymns as they patiently wait to receive the "dripping saints" into the warm folds of towels.

Water Entry and Positioning. When the preacher returns to the bank, he may lead a hymn, prayers, and sometimes a short sermon, before taking those being baptized individually into the water. Frequently this is a moment for subdued crying from the women at creek side — and from the individual celebrants (or baptizees).

To prevent a premature immersion before the proper moment, the movement into the water is deliberate and cautious, allowing participants to adjust gradually to the water's coldness. If the person being baptized is a woman wearing a skirt or dress, this forward movement may be interrupted more than once for making sure the skirt is adequately anchored. To prevent the buoying of skirts, women have also been known to sew weights into the hems of baptismal gowns.

After the desired spot is reached, the participants pause for the proper positioning of the celebrant. The preacher then whispers instructions as either the preacher or his assistant wets a folded handkerchief in the water then uses it to cover the person's lower face. (This covering of the nose and mouth prevents the nose-filling suctions that the backward plunge will cause.)

The Immersion. When all is ready, hands are raised, support is given the celebrant's back or head, and one preacher says something like the following: "We baptize this our sister in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit."

The immersion is then quickly executed with a backward dip, resulting in the total submersion of the celebrant's body: The waters of the "liquid grave" cover all, cleansing and purifying. From this symbolic descent, the "dripping saint" then arises, sputtering from the water, shaking from the cold, and probably crying from the emotional trauma.

Cold water helps. It shocks the spiritual man as it does the physical man, awakening him to a new being.

— Brother Jimmy Francis of Lansing, N.C., Separate Baptist, June 17, 1990

The Emotional Response. Because of the water's coldness, most people being baptized experience quite a shock upon rising from a mountain stream. In fact, some are known to have intense emotional responses — throw hands in the air, give shouts of joy, cry profusely, or even display the jerks, a spasmodic shaking of the entire body. Indeed, in Holiness-Pentecostal baptisms, such seizures are recognized as signs that the celebrant has been anointed with the Holy Spirit, the "second blessing." Holiness-Pentecostal preachers have even been known to douse converts two or three times in quick succession to encourage such responses.

Following the immersion, responses from creek side are quite intense, as relatives and friends revel in the experience of the baptized. It is at this point that the shouting Fields mentioned may occur, drawing the women to action in support of the celebrant. Crowd contagion may also take over, with one or more observers stepping forward as candidates for baptism. I witnessed this phenomenon myself in 1990 at a New River baptism.

The Towel Communion. Following the immersion, the women stand waiting, with one or more towels held out. The emotional displays continue as the "dripping saint" is wrapped in the warm folds of cloth and enveloped in the arms of loved ones and friends. This is the welcoming, the taking of the celebrant into the fold — and his or her reward for responding to the call. A final prayer closes the ceremonies; then all is over. The crowds are hesitant to leave, however, lingering in the deep communion that invariably follows the ritual of wetness.

Howard Dorgan

This group of Old Regular Baptists prayed in July 1988, before conducting a baptism on the Russell Fork of the Big Sandy.

Howard Dorgan is a professor of communication at Appalachian State University who often writes about Appalachian religious traditions. His latest book, Airwaves of Zion: Radio and Religion in Appalachia, *was awarded the 1993 Thomas Wolfe Literary Award.*

A Lasting Impression

Grandmother prepares for the priest's yearly blessing.
The house glows — a sunburst in August.
The children are dressed like wedding attendants.
Grandfather is sober. The steel mill washed from his body.
Paczki doughnuts perfume the kitchen.
Homemade beer hides in the cellar.
The Bible lays open, the bookmark a rosary.
Father Majesky enters with incense and chalk for the doorway.
Gasper, Balthazar, Melchior he engraves there.
Knowing no English he speaks in their language.
"Piekny religijny dom." "Beautiful religious home,"
he congratulates my grandmother.
As he turns to leave the forgotten pet parrot swears in Polish.

— Georgeann Eskievich Rettberg

Georgeann Eskievich Rettberg, the granddaughter of Polish and Croatian immigrants, is a support specialist for the Pittsburgh Public Schools, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Dinner on the Ground

I was fourteen before
I ever heard of dinner on the ground.
She tried to explain to me
that you really didn't eat off the ground;
nor was it really dinner,
but lunch, as in *breakfast*, *dinner*, *supper*.
I didn't much want to go,
but when I figured out she meant
a picnic in the cemetery,
I knew then and there
this was the foolishest thing I'd heard of.

She made me go anyway.
I tried to act like I wasn't there;
if I sat still enough
on the wooden bench during the meeting
I hoped I'd vanish
or be mistaken for a tree.
She was put out with me
when I told her I thought this was heathen,
you wouldn't catch *me*
having no picnic in a cemetery.
And even if the cemetery was full of my kin,
I still wasn't going to eat.

Then my grandma's sister,
her paper plate wobbly with food, told us
over her shoulder
that she was gonna go eat with
her husband. He'd been dead twenty years.
I about vomited
when she sat down at the foot of his grave,
smiling and talking
to the empty air while she ate
her fried chicken and green beans,
and her macaroni and tomatoes, and her pop.
When she finished,
she patted the little granite footstone.
She hoisted herself up
and wiped her hands on the front of her dress.
She looked back,
and I swear she winked at that headstone.

"It's been so long,"
she said, seeing me gape.
"And he always did love to eat."

— Rebecca Bailey

Rebecca Bailey is co-author of a poetry collection entitled Three Women Alone in the Woods *(from Trillium Publications). She lives in Rowan County, Ky.*

Courtesy of Archives and Special Collections, ETSU, Erlene Ledford Photographs

Dinner on the ground.

Body Snatchers, Predators, and Premature Burials

Intriguing Facts about Mountain Wakes

I first encountered death when my maternal grandmother passed away in 1952. Although I was very young, I can still remember the all-night wake, the trauma of the emotion-filled funeral, and my grandmother's burial in the mountains of southwestern Virginia. These memories haunted me and later, when I began my studies in sociology, I decided to focus on the death rituals of my mountain ancestors.

In my recent book, *Death and Dying in Central Appalachia,* I discuss many of the colorful mountain practices and how they have changed. Wakes are particularly interesting because they were once so widely practiced and such an important connecting force within mountain culture.

The purpose of the wake, besides allowing friends and family to mourn, was to protect the corpse from predators — and to make sure that the deceased was actually dead. Interviews, conducted in Central Appalachia, revealed several tales of individuals believed to be deceased, who suddenly displayed signs of life. One interviewee told the story of a person, supposedly dead, who while being carried by wagon to his freshly dug grave, suddenly sat up, rubbed his eyes, and asked what was going on.

The issue of protecting the body from predators was particularly important in the years before window screens and insect repellents. At the wake, friends and relatives were expected to maintain a 24-hour vigil to keep insects away. The watchers also kept a lookout for rats that often infested the farmsteads — and cats that were known to mutilate and even eat the eyes of the corpse. In Franklin, N.C., a mountaineer once described an instance in which a cat, before being discovered and removed, actually ate off the fingers of the deceased. Some people even believed that a cat could take the dead person's soul.

Other explanations for the mountain tradition of sitting up with the dead are a belief that the body might be stolen by body snatchers or carried off by "agents of the invisible world." However, some Central Appalachians believed, like other Americans, that the wake served a psychological need by helping friends and relatives slowly acclimate to the death of their loved one.

Following a death, wakes usually lasted throughout the night, with the burial conducted at about two o'clock the next afternoon. However, various factors — such as the time of year, inclement weather, and the grave's location — could extend a wake's length. One mountaineer described how his grandma had passed away during winter when the ground was too frozen to dig a grave. The grandma, who had not been embalmed, was placed outside on the front porch in a rocking chair, where she was preserved by the cold until the burial could occur.

Laying Out the Body

To hold a wake, the family generally placed the prepared body on display in the home, usually in a coffin which rested on a table or two chairs. The site was usually the living room or parlor. When everything was ready, friends, neighbors, and relatives would arrive to assist the family or just to sit with the corpse. This usually lasted throughout the night, sometimes with one group sitting with the body until midnight and another taking over until daybreak.

In the days before embalming, a major chore of the wakers, which was begun during the laying out of the body, was to spend the night applying a cloth wet with soda water, camphor, or alcohol to the face of the corpse to keep it from changing color. One informant noted that "they'd fix a solution of soda water and they'd keep that rag wet all night. And put it on their face." Some mourners placed a saucer of salt on the stomach or chest during the preparation of the body and constantly changed it throughout the wake. The salt was supposed to soak up moisture and keep the corpse from swelling and bursting. An elderly woman in eastern Kentucky reported knowing a number of people who swelled so badly they burst the casket.

Food and Reminiscing

Food, brought in by sympathetic neighbors, was plentiful at wakes, and meals were usually consumed in the same room with the deceased. One source noted that the watchers ate teacakes, gingerbread, and sweet potatoes that had been roasted in the fireplace ashes. An elderly couple in Fall Branch, Tenn., reported that at one wake a whole pig was roasted to accompany the food brought in by neighbors.

Conversation was usually lively and often dealt with religious matters. Wakers speculated on the afterlife and the future of the deceased in the hereafter. Would the departed go to heaven, and would family members join the deceased when they died? Grieving was open and unashamed. There was prayer, hymn singing, and, in some instances, a service was held similar

by James Crissman

to the actual funeral. The virtues of the dead person were extolled, but shortcomings were never mentioned. Good times and shared activities — like hunting, fishing, or cooking — were often recounted.

In Central Appalachia, wakes tended to be gala affairs, more like celebrations than solemn occasions. Watchers were supplied with firewood, food, and whiskey, and they drank, ate, and gambled into the night. The spirit of the wake is captured in this excerpt from *North Carolina Mountain Folklore and Miscellany* by H. Cooper:

> As the evening wore on, the wake became more festive. Jokes were told and riddles propounded, then came a round of tongue twisters. A young lady sang "Black Jack Davis" and "Barbara Allen." A young man played the banjo which he had brought along, while an elderly man cut the pigeon wing. Two men started the game of Morris and two other men tried their hands at Fox and Goose. The young lady who had done the singing and her boyfriend went outside and courted in the moonlight on the farther end of the porch. Inside the kitchen, young ladies had their fortunes told from the formation of coffee grounds in twirled cups. As the night progressed, the hungry ate and drank coffee at intervals, a jug of whiskey was repeatedly passed to those who craved a drink of moonshine.

People told me that sometimes the corpse was placed in the corner or carried into another room to provide space for dancing, singing, or game playing. In the morning, it would be returned to the table or chairs for the funeral. An elderly woman in West Virginia remembered a death in which the family wanted the deceased left where he died until burial. He died sitting in a chair in the living room. They left him there, sat with him during the night, sang hymns, and then buried the body the next day. Another West Virginian recalled that wakers pitched pennies on the hearth, and later, when the drinking started, they removed the corpse and took turns lying in the coffin.

The Modern Wake

In the vast majority of deaths in contemporary Central Appalachia, the deceased is kept overnight in a church or funeral parlor instead of in the home. At least 99 percent of the bodies are now embalmed. Therefore, while one night is still the standard, the visitation can be longer without causing problems.

Because there is no longer a need to sit with the deceased to keep cats, insects, rats, body snatchers, and other predators away, the contemporary wake is no longer an all-night affair, except when requested. A funeral director in Barbourville, Ky., reported that only about one in 100 visitations involved a request to sit with the deceased. The "visitation" or "viewing," as the wake is termed today, generally lasts about three hours, starting at 6 p.m.

The viewing today is still a social event, a chance to renew old friendships, to show respect for the deceased and family, or just to interact socially. On one occasion, while I was interviewing at a funeral home in North Carolina, a citizen dropped by to see if there was to be a wake that afternoon. She apparently needed a chance to socialize.

Neighborliness is just as extensive as in previous years. Food is still provided for the bereaved; however, it's not brought to the site of the viewing, and participants don't eat in the presence of the deceased. Unless there has been an accident or debilitating illness, the body is still, as in the past, displayed in an open casket. Occasionally, families decide to have the casket closed.

Taking photographs of the body was a popular practice in the early 1900s and continues in some parts of Central Appalachia, even though photographs of a loved one may already exist. A funeral director in the mountains of West Virginia once recounted the story of two unmarried sisters whose brother had passed away. The body was taken to the funeral home where it was embalmed, clothed, and placed in the casket. The sisters, however, requested that the body be transferred to the home for a short period before the funeral home wake. When the corpse was returned, the funeral director noticed that the body's clothing was rumpled and unkempt; there was evidence the deceased had been moved around in the casket. When questioned, the sisters confessed they had never had their picture taken with their brother and so had removed him from his casket, stood him between them, and had a family portrait taken.

Photo courtesy of James Crissman

A woman laid out during a wake of the late 1800s or early 1900s.

Adapted from James Crissman's book entitled Death and Dying in Central Appalachia *by permission of University of Illinois Press, copyright ©1994.*

James K. Crissman is professor of sociology at Illinois Benedictine College, Lisle.

A Decoration Day Remembered

by Jeanne Shannon

A woman recalls rich memories of growing up in Dickenson County, Va., and the family's Decoration Day rituals.

In my childhood in Dickenson County, Va., in the early 1940s, the day of remembrance was not called Memorial Day; we knew it as Decoration Day. It came at a magical time of the year, at the leafy, flowery end of May when the air still held the freshness of spring — and the heavy, sultry days of summer had not yet arrived.

I remember one especially radiant Decoration Day in the early 1940s, when I was seven or eight.

In the deep green of the woods the white blooms of dogwood and buckeye and "sarvis" sparkled like earth-bound stars. Here and there the flame azalea lit up the undergrowth with its orange fires. And everywhere were the dark, glossy leaves and pink-white flowers of mountain laurel. Earlier in the month, the white oaks had burst out in tiny velvet leaves that were larger now, and turning green.

To nature's splendid decoration, my mother added her own. In the long, leafy, shining afternoons, after she had walked the two miles home from her job as a school teacher at Osborne's Gap, she pulled out sheets of pink, red, and white crepe paper and created roses — roses in full bloom, roses still budding, roses half open to the light. I watched her cut out the petal shapes from the crinkly paper, then "scrape" them with a little knife or the blade of the scissors so they curled like real rose petals. Then she created dark green stems and fastened the flowers to them with thin, delicate wire.

After a while, she assigned the scraping to me. I loved feeling the crisp paper between my thumb and the scissors, and seeing the edges of the petals curl as I pulled the blade across them.

On the evening before Decoration Day, she and Grandma'am, who lived with us, went out into the yard and cut big bouquets of snowball, iris, and early rose. They put the flowers in tall vases of cold well water and set them on the cool stone of the hearth in "the middle room," the shadiest room in the house. The crepe-paper flowers had already been arranged in baskets nearby, willow baskets that Mother had made in some earlier summer.

On Decoration Day that year, there was no family reunion, so we didn't picnic in the cemetery. After the noonday meal (it was dinner, of course), we gathered the real flowers and the crepe-paper roses and set out. Daddy carried the heaviest bouquets of snowballs. I carried a little vase of oxeye daisies and yellow groundsel I had picked that morning. The vase was my favorite one — a mottled blue and white with a flower design on the front and the words "Made in Czechoslovakia" on the bottom.

We went out through the back yard, pushed open the tall gate in the paling fence, and trudged through the cornfield — past the upper barn then the lower one — into the deep shade of the woods. At the edge of the woods stood an enormous pine. It often sheltered a strange, solitary bird that no one could identify, a bird that called sometimes at dusky dark in a haunting voice like a dove's. I always hurried past that tree, feeling a shiver up my back, even when others were with me.

> ***In the long, leafy, shining afternoons . . . she pulled out sheets of pink, red, and white crepe paper and created roses — roses in full bloom, roses still budding, roses half open to the light.***

Just beyond the tree was the creek, "our" creek, whose proper name was White Oak. We crossed its wobbly footlog one at a time, carefully balancing our blossomy burdens, and walked on through the dappled light under the alders and hemlocks, and the shadows under the oaks. The path steepened sharply. Then suddenly we came up into the bright sunlight glinting on the tombstones. Daddy opened the rusty metal gate, and we went inside the cemetery. Wind moaned through two cedars that had been planted long ago just inside the fence.

Grandma'am placed her flowers at the head of her son's grave — Daddy's brother, who had died in a car wreck in Kentucky just before I was born. She read aloud the inscription on his tombstone: "Thy troubles over, thy rest is won." His picture was set into the stone, and his eyes seemed to follow us as we walked among the graves. Grandma'am looked at his picture, then sighed deeply and looked away.

Slowly we put out flowers on the other graves — on the graves of Grandma'am's parents, who had died before I was born, and on those of two brothers and their wives, who had both died young, leaving orphaned children.

We didn't talk much as we arranged the flowers. Mother and Daddy and Grandma'am were remembering the people who were buried there, while I was trying to imagine where they were and what they were doing in that mysterious place called Gloryland.

Looking down through a space between the leafy trees, I could see the house in the misty distance below — the long porch at the back, the tall windows gazing like gaunt eyes, and, on either side, the cornfields and the potato patches. And there, on the long dusty ribbon of road, a man rode slowly by on horseback. A breeze ruffled the oak leaves and sighed in the cedar trees. Far away, a rooster crowed lonesomely. Grandma'am had stopped weeping and stood looking down at the fields below.

In 1946, we moved away from that farm to another one in neighboring Wise County. We came back on Decoration Day weekend in 1957. This time, there was a family reunion around the graves with Grandma'am, her sisters, nieces, and nephews, my parents, and me. The graveyard had gone to weeds, saplings, and wild hop vine. But the men had come prepared, with axes, scythes, and saws; it took them until twilight to clear the green growth away.

In the valley below, the old house stood empty. The long porches were rotting away. Animals had crawled in through the broken windows and built nests in the closets. But still the house sang to me its thousand thousand memories.

Years later I came back once more, on a July afternoon, to find the landscape of my childhood transformed into a summer camp for Freewill Baptist children. The house, the barns, the corn cribs, and the fences were all gone. Where the house had stood was the camp office, with messages blaring out over the loudspeaker. By the road to the cemetery were little cottages where the children slept. I wondered if the whippoorwills sang them to sleep, as they had me on so many summer evenings long ago.

The big pine tree was gone, and with it the bird of mystery. White Oak Creek had been dammed up to make a lake for boating and swimming, and the footpath under the alders had been replaced by a road that a car could travel. This time, the graveyard was clear of weeds and hop vines. The cedars were dead, their gray skeletons still standing watch over the valley below, where, on that day so long ago, we had looked down and seen the old house with its long porches and the man on horseback riding east.

And now among the graves was Grandma'am's. She was laid to rest on a cold, end-of-February afternoon in 1961, as a gray, sodden rain fell through the leafless trees. Not long before she died, she had had a dream in which she saw herself walking through a field of yellow flowers that stretched endlessly away; she had seen it as an omen of her death. That afternoon in the 1970s, though it was long past Decoration Day, I put a bouquet of yellow groundsel on her grave.

Jeanne Shannon resides in Albuquerque, N.M., but lived the first 10 years of her life in Dickenson County, Va. Her poetry, fiction, and essays have been published in a variety of small press and university publications. In 1991, she was the City of Albuquerque Poet-in-Residence at the University of New Mexico.

The Rituals of Remembering

Each year, people flock to Jonesville, Va., for a rare homecoming filled with reunion, ritual, and friendship.

Folks say that it's been a tradition in Lee County, Va., since the 1800s.

Every Memorial Day weekend, people from throughout the state and beyond travel to the Millers Chapel Memorial Grounds in Jonesville — to honor the dead and to reunite with family and friends. Some call it the Millers Chapel Memorial reunion.

Pauline Sexton Taylor, a native of Ben Hur, fondly recalls coming to the gatherings year after year, even as a child. "I've gone to that cemetery ever since I was big enough to walk," she said proudly. "I remember when the cemetery was much smaller. Back then, there were about 25 people who would go up there, but now we have crowds of about 200 who come on and off all weekend long."

The homecoming generally begins two days before Memorial Day when bunches of flowers are carefully draped on the graves and people begin reuniting. On Memorial Day, a crowd gathers at about 2 p.m. for the sharing of food, Christian music, and preaching. Because so many people attend, a three-member committee oversees the annual planning of the event, as well as the grounds upkeep. Each year, a small area under a tent is designated for donations, which brings in substantial funding. This year alone $4,000 were contributed.

For Taylor, the events bring to mind a wellspring of graveside memories and rituals. "Even when I was just a little girl," she said, "Mommy would make flowers out of crepe paper and dip them in paraffin. Then she would make them into wreaths that I would take with me ... My best memories are the days I used to walk from Ben Hur, about five miles away, to deliver my flowers. I carried a small, white handkerchief with me. Once I had placed the flowers, I would find a flowering bush called the Bubby Bush and pick a few of the buds which I placed in my handkerchief. Then I would begin my walk back home and smell those flowers all the way."

— Elaine McClellan

Elaine McClellan of Jonesborough, Tenn., is a former staff writer for the Johnson City Press. *She now works for The Tombras Group of Kingsport, Tenn.*

Remembrances in Tender Prose

When folks pass on in Craig County, Va., the family of the deceased usually calls the funeral home.

Then they're likely to call Charles Spraker — a 65-year-old retired fireman who is widely known in these parts as the connoisseur of obituary writing. A resident of Meadow Creek, Va., Spraker is noted for being something of a mountain philosopher, given to quaint observations about his surroundings and the people he befriends. Some time back, he decided most obituaries were just too dull — and he began writing his own, offering up colorful anecdotes and reminiscences about the deceased. "I like to bring a little humor to a sad situation," he noted.

The obituaries Spraker pens are heartfelt tributes to people he has personally known. "I don't believe I could do it if I didn't know the person," he once said. Here is one of Spraker's more creative tributes.

Amanda E. Carper died August 19, 1983

High up Craig County's Tumbling Gap Mountain overlooking Meadow Creek Valley and the Cumberland Road in a mountain home on May 30, 1904, a baby girl was delivered to Virginia C. and James P. Carper. They named her Amanda Ellen. She was to be the baby in a family of five children, having two brothers and two sisters.

Amanda never left home except for short visits with her married brother or sister and never had a serious beau. She worked hard and long, and time just sorta slipped away.

Amanda was quiet and shy and loved to be alone with her work. She crocheted, canned, cooked, and called her brother, Os, to supper until he died last July. She lit the lantern and left it sitting on the porch many a night for her father and brother to use unhitching and feeding the horses. They're gone now, and Mandy's gone too, but somewhere there is a lighted lantern shining brightly showing Mandy the way home.

Cindy Pinkston, Roanoke Times & World-News

Mountain philosopher and obituary writer Charles Spraker looks out from his home in Meadow Creek, Va.

Reprinted by permission from the Roanoke Times & World-News, *Roanoke, Virginia.*

— Elaine McClellan

Gathering of the Clan

(somewhere in the Appalachian highlands)

Once a year they
gather to become
kin again pallets on
the floor fried chicken
potatoes dripping with
butter biscuits buttermilk
light molasses and blackberry jam
fresh from July picking
into the night lightening in
a jar green glow from
the yard echoes the old
songs remembered by the walls
ringed by furniture pushed
back for dancing clog buck and
wing the littlest nodding to
the rhythm of Grandma's heartbeat
one-and-two swing your
partner new wives still
throw back their heads to
laugh to tunes first fiddled
when outlawed pipes hung
silent in the rafters rising blood
sings like wind through
autumn maples bright tartan
swinging to the rhythm
dies into the night.

—A. Jane Hicks

Jane Hicks teaches gifted elementary students in Sullivan County, Tenn. A frequent contributor to Now & Then, *she is currently building a new home in nearby Blountville.*

Love Lore From the Mountains

by Charlotte H. Deskins

In the realm of love, sometimes a chant or ritual can reveal extraordinary things about the future.

When I was a girl growing up in War, W.Va., I was surrounded by the legends and folk tales of my mother and grandmother. As a child, I was enchanted by these old stories and sayings, many of which related to the traditions of love and marriage.

One ritual in particular had to do with putting up apples at harvest time. As a teenager, I was instructed to peel the apple carefully in one long strip then to toss the peeling over my left shoulder. Whatever letter the strip formed upon landing was said to be the initial of my one true love.

Needless to say, I peeled quite a few apples.

Another ritual involved taking two acorns and scratching my own initials on one and those of my beloved on the other — then tossing both acorns into the fire. How they burned was a clue to how the relationship was destined to fare. If the acorns sputtered and popped, the love was untrue. If they burned brightly and steadily, however, I was sure to have a long, happy marriage.

I can also recall participating in a ritual called "New Moon, True Moon" that involved going with several of my female friends or relatives into the garden beneath the light of a new moon. After positioning ourselves with the moon visible over our left shoulders, we then spread out our squares of cloth and chanted the following verse:

New moon, true moon,
Pray tell unto me,
Who it is my true love shall be.
The color of his eyes and hair,
Show me in my sleep tonight.

As the chant was said, each girl scooped up three handfuls of fresh soil and placed it in her cloth, then tied it into a bundle. Without saying a word, we then walked backwards into the house. Each girl placed the bundle under her pillow and went directly to sleep, whereupon she was expected to dream of her true love. The next morning, each girl sifted through the soil in the bundle hoping to find a hair from the head of the man she was going to marry.

Most of the time, we couldn't resist talking a little during the ritual, thus breaking the spell. But it was still fun to speculate about what our future husbands would look like.

In my mother's day, most of the courting was done at home or accompanied by a chaperon, usually an older brother or sister. Because of this, not much hanky-panky was permitted between young Appalachian couples. Still, many funny things happened. For example, my mother, who was quite the heartbreaker, once found herself with not one, but two, suitors who came calling on the same night. She was sitting in the parlor with the first caller when her sister informed her that suitor number two, in whom she was truly interested, was on his way up the road. Thinking quickly, my mother ushered her first companion into the kitchen, gave him a quick glass of lemonade, thanked him for a lovely evening, and escorted him out the back door. This left the poor guy puzzled and wondering exactly what had happened, but he had little choice except to head for home. My mother's evening was then free for suitor number two, whom she eventually married.

Charlotte H. Deskins of Richlands, Va., is a free-lance writer whose work has appeared in numerous publications, including The Business of Herbs, Blue Ridge Country, *and* Goldenseal.

Buttermilk

They knew the moon
and the moon knew them,
five females in various women forms
mooned the earth, giving their sweet
stream back in a song that said
"Alive, alive." Laughing, long-haired,
girls in nightgowns, their feet white as shells.
In summer crickets sang, distant dogs barked.
Winter they wore the warmth
from a wood fire toward the same
scene the moon saw.
They opened themselves
like an internal eye, a secret eye
to the earth that bore them.
Pretended they were going to tell the moon
goodnight.
White as biscuits, mounds of dough,
they rose to the occasion. Soft dust
disturbed the chickens, though
the cats long ago claimed circles
under the porch.
Earth was all around and ready
to receive even an ounce
of what it had given.

Daughters of Venus
outside in their own shells.
Earth's daughters, earth's mothers.

A long path led
to the half moon house
and in the dark, things
in the weeds, moved
and whispered.

— Ruth Moose

Ruth Moose has published two short story collections and individual stories in a variety of magazines. Her work is used in southern studies at the University of Denmark.

ETSU

News CASS

Fall 1994

Newsletter of the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services • East Tennessee State University

Archives & Special Collections
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CARROLL REECE MUSEUM

From the Director:

Thank you for your response to *News Cass*. You've told us you like the format, the comprehensive news, and our enhanced membership program. More of you are becoming members of the center, and many of you are assisting us by joining at higher levels of memberships, such as **CASS Partners**. We appreciate your support. Our 10th anniversary year has been our best year yet for gifts from our friends, including those who have given gifts of their time and talents and those who have given financial support.

This fall we will continue our anniversary celebration with several events that help showcase the work of the center. As a charter member of the **Birthplace of Country Music Alliance**, a region-wide group dedicated to bringing Appalachia's musical heritage to national and international attention, we will be part of the Alliance's first major musical event— a concert by legendary musician **Doc Watson** that will also honor the Carter family, the Stonemans, Jimmie Rodgers, record producer Ralph Peer, and the landmark 1927 recording sessions in Bristol, Tenn.-Va. The concert will be held September 8, Rodgers' birthday, at the Paramount Theatre in Bristol.

The center will host the fall meeting of the **Friends of the Blue Ridge Parkway**. This group assists the national park through educational programs, public advocacy on behalf of the Parkway, and conservation efforts. The October meeting will be the first time the group has met in Tennessee.

In November, the **Reece Museum** will host an exhibit highlighting research projects funded by the center during its 10-year history. The center has funded research about Appalachia in art, health care, music, environmental education, literature, history, and

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THEME FROM A SUMMER PLACE:

TENNESSEE HERITAGE

By Penelope Lane and Tony Galloway

This past summer, the center hosted the **Governor's School for Tennessee Heritage**. In its ninth year, currently under the direction of center director Dr. Jean Speer, the school is an enrichment program for high school students lasting approximately four weeks. The school is conducted under the auspices of the Office of Auxiliary Programs of the Tennessee Department of Education.

The program is broken into two major parts: all students undertake an intensive study of Tennessee history, and then each chooses from a variety of project groups that allow participants to explore their individual interests in archaeology, historic preservation, music, literature, governmental issues, or drama. Students must apply for this program in the fall and are selected through a rigorous screening process. While the students are involved in the Governor's School, they are also exposed to a variety of guest speakers, field trips, and other hands-on experiences.

The 1994 school was a great success. The opening session was once again blessed with well-known writer **Wilma Dykeman** as the keynote speaker. Through her

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INSIDE:

Dance book completed, p. 2

Archives promotes outreach, p. 5

Roseberry retires, p. 6

ARNOW BIDS HAIL & FARE-WELL TO *NOW & THEN*

After sending the summer issue celebrating the center's first decade of existence off to the printer, *Now & Then* editor **Pat Arnow** left to assume the editorship of *Southern Exposure* as of July 1. *Southern Exposure* is a quarterly journal devoted to Southern politics and culture and published by the Institute for Southern Studies in Durham, N.C. Center assistant director **Jane Harris Woodside** will be taking on the duties of editor-in-chief with the publication of the *Now & Then's* spring issue.

During her eight-year tenure, Arnow did a remarkable job editing the center publication. She took the publication she inherited from ETSU English professor **Fred Waage**, mastered the basics, and then went on to refine and expand it until it became the lively and respected publication it is today. Most of all, with her deep commitment to Appalachia and to good writing, she always took great care to see that serious thought and solid research about the region were always translated into accessible prose.

In the interim between Arnow and Woodside, the center has been fortunate to have the services of **Jill Oxendine**, who functioned as acting editor for the fall issue on Rituals and Celebrations. No stranger to *Now & Then* readers, Oxendine has been a frequent contributor to the magazine during the course of her 15-year career as writer and editor.

Woodside has been working with the center as a folklorist, writer and researcher since 1987. Between earning a master's in English literature from Temple University and a master's in folklore from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, she worked as a reporter for *Business Week Magazine.* ◆

Director, continued from p. 1

a host of other areas of concern to our region. Fellowship awardees will be invited to a special reception to open the exhibit.

Finally, the center will help sponsor a Writer's Workshop in November with another one of our agency partners, the **Tennessee Writer's Alliance.**

We continue to have a gratifying 10th anniversary. Our current issue of *Now & Then* focuses on Celebrations and Rituals in Appalachia. For us, this anniversary has been a ritual of remembrance and renewal. Join us as we renew our commitment to study and serve the Appalachian region.

Jean Haskell Speer, Director
Center for Appalachian Studies and Services ◆

THE DANCER AND THE DANCE

Communities in Motion: Dance, Community, and Tradition in America's Southeast and Beyond, co-edited by center assistant director **Jane Harris Woodside** and former center fellow **Susan Eike Spalding,** has been accepted for publication by Greenwood Press. The book is a collection of essays on vernacular dance inspired by the 1989 and 1990 groundbreaking conferences on vernacular and traditional dance sponsored by the center.

Included are articles on forms ranging from old-time square to the revival of Cherokee dance in western North Carolina, from African-American

"O body swayed to music, O brightening glance,
How can we know the dancer from the dance?"
—W. B. Yeats
"Among School Children"

fraternity step dance to the process of reconstructing 18th century quadrilles and cotillions for Colonial Williamsburg. The editors have taken care to include articles that are based upon solid research but at the same time are written in a clear, accessible style. A unique feature of the manuscript is the inclusion of lengthy excerpts from interviews with vernacular dancers, dancers such as old-time square dance caller **Veronia Miller** of Bristol, Tenn., and precision dancer **Barbara Bogart** of Kingsport, Tenn. They speak eloquently about dance's meaning and place in their lives.

Publication is expected in early 1995. ◆

CENTER STAFF

Dr. Jean Haskell Speer, Director
Jane Harris Woodside, Asst. Director
Charles Moore, Coordinator
Penelope Lane, Technical Clerk
Nancy Fischman, Asst. Editor, *Now & Then*
Frieda Souder, Secretary

Archives & Special Collections
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Selected Recent Acquisitions

The following manuscript collections have been donated to Archives and Special Collections. For more detailed information regarding specific acquisitions or for anyone who might be interested in donating materials, please contact the department at Box 70665, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, TN 37614-0665.

PAT ARNOW COLLECTION
1988-90. 1.25 linear ft.

Consists of materials gathered during the researching and writing of the play "Cancell'd Destiny" based on the life of Christine Burleson. Includes audio cassettes of interviews conducted by Steve Giles, Christine Murdock, and Arnow with persons who knew Burleson; press releases; correspondence; notes; and other material on Burleson and Thomas Stribling. Donated by Pat Arnow, Center for Appalachian Studies and Services, ETSU.

JEFFERSON BURLESON PAPERS
1864. 1 folder.

Consists of photocopies of the discharge papers of Burleson from the Union Army (8th Tennessee Cavalry), 1864. Donated by Samule Weaver, Unicoi, Tenn.

JAMES TIPTON ELLIS JOURNAL
1895-1910.

Consists of a photocopy of a journal kept by Ellis at a general store in Carter County, Tenn. Entries include information regarding births, marriages, and deaths in Carter County, as well as records of purchases of goods from the store. Donated by Robert T. Nave, Johnson City, Tenn.

NORMA JENNINGS COLLECTION
1979-82. 1 linear ft.

Consists of materials related to two strikes at the Maryville, Tenn. Levi Strauss plant during 1979. Includes arbitration proceedings which followed the strikes, as well as 1981 and 1982 United Garment Workers of America Local 402 votes on various issues, among these being a new contract and changes in by-laws. Donated by Norma Jennings, Maryville, Tenn.

B. CARROLL REECE MUSEUM RECORDS
1966-89. 5 linear ft. *Addition.*

Consists of office files from the Reece Museum and includes files on the Brightly scholarship, museum exhibits, correspondence of the museum director, material on ETSUs 75th anniversary celebration and other topics related to musuem functions. Donated by Helen Roseberry, Reece Museum, ETSU.

SOUTHERN EMPOWERMENT PROJECT RECORDS
1985-93. 1.4 linear ft.

Consists of records of this Maryville, Tenn.-based organization, which seeks to recruit and train people to be organizers. Material includes financial reports, meeting agendas, minutes, weekly work reports, and training session curricula. Donated by June Rostan, Maryville, Tenn.

WHITE FAMILY PAPERS
1817-78. 1 folder.

Consists of legal documents related primarily to land transactions entered into by members of the White family in Greene and Washington County, Tenn. Donated by Howard Ledbetter, College of Education, ETSU. ♦

ARCHIVES STAFF

Norma Myers, Director
Marie Tedesco, Technical Services Archivist
Ned Irwin, Public Services Archivist
Ed Speer, Library Assistant
Georgia Greer, Secretary

POLITICS IN APPALACHIA

Politics, in its myriad forms, presents many topics for research at the national, state, and local levels, as well as regionally in Appalachia. The following indicates some of the resource materials available in the Sherrod Library's Archives and Special Collections Department for research use.

Manuscript Collections

B. Carroll Reece Papers
Long-time Congressman Reece's extensive collection includes correspondence, memoranda, speeches, reports, clippings, etc. covering Reece's career, primarily 1908-1961. Topics include Andrew Johnson, McCarthyism, the Pearl Harbor investigation, and Republican national politics. Correspondents include Harry Truman, Dwight Eisenhower, Robert A. Taft, and J. Edgar Hoover, among others.

Washington County (Tenn.) Court Records
Includes administrative and judicial records having permanent value for Washington County, Tennessee and spans 1780-1960s.

Frederick S. Heiskell Collection
Includes correspondence and scrapbooks connected to Heiskell's (1786-1851) involvement in abolitionism and early Tennessee and Whig Party politics. Correspondents include John Bell, William G. Brownlow, and James A. Garfield.

Broadside Television Collection
Includes videotaped programs on the political aspects of such topics as the Tennessee Valley Authority, strip mining, union organizing, sanitary landfill development, and annexation.

Congress for Appalachian Development Collection
Includes correspondence, transcripts of testimony, clippings, and other materials related to the political aspects of such topics as regional electric power development, the Appalachian Regional Commission, economic development, the coal industry, and the Tennessee Valley Authority.

Benjamin Harrison Taylor Family Papers
Includes biographical and political materials (correspondence, election materials, speeches, clippings, memorabilia, etc.) related to Taylor's life (1888-1930) and that of his father, Alfred Alexander Taylor (1848-1931).

John Fain Anderson Papers
This collection of scrapbooks includes material (1861-1925) on East Tennessee politics and government,
Republican Party, and individual politicans such as Andrew Johnson, James K. Polk, the Brownlows, Bob and Alf Taylor, T. A. R. Nelson, and Andrew Jackson.

City of Johnson City Records
Includes administrative and judicial records of permanent value for the city of Johnson City, Tennessee from c. 1890.

William Henley Nelson Family Papers
Includes correspondence, speeches, appointments, etc. related to Nelson's (1837-1935) political career in East Tennessee. Correspondents include William G. Brownlow and Theodore Roosevelt.

Barnicle-Cadle Collection
Includes recordings of political ballads, worker's protests, political satire, and other songs of this type.

Appalachian Photographic Archive

For photographs see such headings as Local Government; Johnson City, Tenn.--Politics and Government; and the names of individual politicans.

Appalachian Vertical Files

These files contain clippings, pamphlets, copies of articles, etc. See the subheading *Politics and Government* under the names of individual countries, states, cities, as well as checking headings for individuals.

Special Collections

This collection of monographs includes many titles related to the study of politics, politicans, and political issues. The following is a list of some significant books. Please consult the collection's online catalog for additional titles.

Appalachian Regional Commission. *A report to Congress on the continuation of the Appalachia Regional Commission: an overview.* 1979. HC 107 .A127 A72

Chapman, Shirley. *Democrats Challenge Traditional Republicans in Upper East Tennessee.* c. 1977. JK 5295 .C45

Combs, William H. and William E. Cole. *Tennessee: a political study.* 1940. JK 5225

Special Collections

Crews, James M., Jr. *J. F. K. and the Mountaineers: John F. Kennedy's Rhetoric in the 1960 West Virginia Presidential Primary.* 1980. JK 2075 .W4 C73

Graf, LeRoy P. and Ralph W. Haskins, eds. *The Papers of Andrew Johnson.* 1967. E 415.6 J65

Hart, Roger L. *Redeemers, Bourbons, and Populists: Tennessee, 1870-1896.* 1975. JK 2295 .T352 H37

James, Marquis. *The life of Andrew Jackson.* (2 parts). 1940. E 382 .J28

McClure, Wallace. *State Constitution-Making.* 1916. JK 2417 .M3

McKinney, Gordon B. *Southern Mountain Republicans, 1865-1900: Politics and the Appalachian Community.* 1978. F 217 .A65 M23

Reece, Brazilla Carroll. *The Courageous Commoner: a biography of Andrew Johnson.* 1962. E 667 .R4

Rice, De Long. *"Old Limber"; or, the tale of the Taylors.* 1921. F436 .T23

Selzick, Philip. *TVA and the Grassroots: a study of politics and organization.* 1980. HD 9685 .U6 A1395

Tennessee Blue Book. (various years). JK 5230 .T4

White, Robert H., et. al. *Messages of the Governors of Tennessee.* 1952-1990. J 87 .T16 ♦

OUTREACH PROGRAMS

A series of nine videotape presentations on selected Appalachian topics has been produced by the archives. These tapes are made available on one month loans to individuals and groups at the nominal rental fee of $5 per tape (to cover postage and wear on the tapes). Anyone interested should contact the archives at (615)929-4338. Tapes with an asterisk indicates that a teaching packet is available as well. Tapes cover the following:

*** Come All Ye Coal Miners** — music, photographs, and narration reveal the spirit and human effort that have been a part of coal mining in the region. (40 minutes)

*** Country Music in the Tri-Cities** — traces the history of radio and the recording industry as it developed in the Bristol-Johnson City-Kingsport, Tennessee area and explains the effects of modernization on musical traditions in the region. (43 minutes)

*** Embreeville** — traces the economic and social history of this small mountain community from early settlement through the "boom or bust" periods of iron, lead, and zinc mining to the recent controversy surrounding the Bumpass Cove landfill. (25 minutes)

*** Hands All Around** — explores the important role quilts and quilting have played in the lives of Appalachians from early settlement to the present. Interviews, modern and historical photographs, musical selections, and quotations from nineteenth century sources blend in an informative program. (21 minutes)

*** Harvesting the Hardwoods: Appalachian Logging Camp Life** — looks at the lives of men and women in the logging camps of Southern Appalachia during the 1920s-30s. The impact of the lumbering industry on the region is revealed in interviews with workers, letters, and a wide range of historical photographs. (30 minutes)

Holston Country Houses: Preserving the Past — examines the various aspects of historic preservation through contemporary photographs and interviews of those actively involved in preserving the built environment. (25 minutes)

Johnson City Album — historic photographs and reminiscences illustrate important themes in the development of the city from earliest times to the present day. Topics examined include the evolution of educational institutions, transportation, changing styles of popular entertainment, and industrial and commerical development. (23 minutes)

*** Long Steel Rail: Southern Mountain Railroads** — studies the history and development of railroads in the region through old photographs, rare recordings, and interviews. (28 minutes)

Pat Alderman: The Making of a Local Historian — through narration, interviews, music, and photographs the program examines Unicoi County, Tenn. author Alderman's historical work and suggests ways in which others might further their own interest in local history and genealogy. (25 minutes) ♦

Carroll Reece Museum

Notes

Although it may be somewhat trite to remind the reader that "change is constant," change often exceeds what is usual or anticipated. Thus, when the guiding force of a campus and community institution initiated retirement, change became inevitable and occurred when Helen Roseberry stepped down as Director of the Reece Museum effective August 4, 1994. Having served as Museum Coordinator from 1981 to 1984, Helen was named Director of the Carroll Reece Museum in 1984, and was recognized by the university community the same year with the Distinguished Staff Award. Prior to her position as Museum Coordinator, she was the museum's registrar beginning in 1972. At one time or another in her career at the Reece, she performed most of the roles associated with the daily operation of the museum.

Helen had a distinguished career in education. Prior to her work as an art and history educator through the museum, she served as a graduate assistant in ETSU's Department of Art while completing studies for a Master in Art degree which was awarded in 1973. Before returning to graduate school, she taught elementary school in the area.

Helen has seen much change and growth in the museum as well as on the university campus, and has been an integral part of that growth and change. Her work toward accreditation and maintaining accreditation of the museum by the American Association of Museums has been exemplary. As the remaining staff again prepares for the reaccreditation process, we will miss her insight, experience, and commitment to the museum's mission to provide the best in exhibits, programs, and museum professionalism for the campus and the community.

CARROLL REECE MUSEUM

October

David LeDoux and John Steele are both creative people – artists who combine pigments with thoughts, images, emotions, ideas, and much more to produce visual statements. Both artists have taught at Tennessee universities for many years, contributing to the level of sophistication in the art of Tennessee. They met when Steele was attending Louisiana State University, and LeDoux, a recent graduate, was teaching at the same univerisity. Both accepted teaching positions at Tennessee universities in 1956, LeDoux at Middle Tennessee State University and Steele at ETSU. In 1994, both LeDoux and Steele announced their retirements from their respective teaching positions, electing to allow more time for their creative endeavors. An exhibit of their work opens this month.

Sunday, October 2
"'Abby': In Praise of the Architecture of Alfred H. Abernethy" closes in Galleries A, C, and D.

Tuesdays, October 4, 11, 18, and 25, 3:30 - 5:00 p.m.
ARTSPLORATION for grades 1 - 3, Anne Reid, Instructor.

Thursdays, October 6, 13, 20, and 27, 3:30 - 5:00 p.m.
ARTSPLORATION for grades 4 - 6, Kathy Deakins, Instructor.

Thursday, October 6
"Celebrating Ten Years of Excellence" from the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services opens in Gallery A.

"LeDoux and Steele: Recent Work" opens in Galleries C and D.

Thursday, October 6, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.
Opening reception for "LeDoux and Steele: Recent Work."

Monday, October 10, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.
Opening reception for "Celebrating Ten Years of Excellence" from the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services.

Tuesday, October 11, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
ARTISTS IN ACTION features Claudia Lee demonstrating handmade paper.

Thursday, October 20, noon
LUNCH BREAK AT THE REECE features The Brother Boys.

November

The rapidly approaching holidays and shopping for a special child may serve as a reminder of this year's holiday exhibit at the museum: "Antique Toys: Childhood Treasures." Remember that seemingly indestructible cast iron car or those handmade treasures of carved wood or stitched fabric? From the simple to the elaborately ornate or the one-of-a-kind to the mass-produced, toys hold special places in our memories.

Memories are also shared in the Poinsettia Memory Tree, a beautiful tree-shaped display of poinsettia plants and a holiday tradition at the Reece since 1986. Share a 'thank you,' mark a special occasion, or remember a loved one with the purchase of a plant for the tree. Bring friends and family to view the tree and holiday decorations that combine to create the spirit of the season at the Reece.

Tuesdays, November 1, 8, 15, and 22, 3:30 - 5:00 p.m.
ARTSPLORATION for grades 1 - 3, Anne Reid, Instructor.

Thursdays, November 3, 10, and 17, 3:30 - 5:00 p.m.
ARTSPLORATION for grades 4 - 6, Kathy Deakins, Instructor.

Saturday, November 5, 9:30 - 11:00 a.m.
Annual Homecoming Brunch honoring retired ETSU Department of Art faculty member John Steele.

Thursday, November 10, 6:00 p.m.
Lecture on the Mongolian Empire by Dr. Henry Antkiewicz, ETSU Department of History.

Tuesday, November 8, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
ARTISTS IN ACTION features Cathie Ferro (Kaida) demonstrating paper collage.

Sunday, November 13
"Celebrating Ten Years of Excellence" from the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services closes in Gallery A.
"LeDoux and Steele: Recent Work" closes in Galleries C and D.

Thursday, November 17, noon
LUNCH BREAK AT THE REECE features author Jo Carson reading from her recent work.

Saturday, November 19.
"Antique Toys: Childhood Treasures," opens in Galleries A, C, and D.

December

For 20 years Director Juanita Ruetz and the Crockett Congregation Chorus from David Crockett High School have provided choral music for the Reece's annual Holiday Tea. Last year when we began to plan an anniversary performance by the chorus, Mrs. Ruetz had not made an announcement of her impending retirement which later became effective at the end of the 1993-94 school year. She has graciously agreed to return to the museum with her former students and invited alumni to help celebrate and acknowledge the years of wonderful music given by those under her tutelage.

Just as the Reece commemorates the 20-year history of the Crockett Congregation's performances this month, Johnson City begins a year-long celebration of its 125th birthday with the unveiling of the "Celebrate the Spirit" quilt made by members of the Blue Ridge Quilters. The quilt highlights the history of Johnson City in five panels, each representing a 25-year period of time. The quilt will be presented to the city December 1 at the City Commission meeting, and then will travel to the Reece for a showing through December 24.

From the Reece Museum's permanent collection

Thursday, December 1, 3:30 - 5:00 p.m.
ARTSPLORATION for grades 4 - 6, Kathy Deakins, Instructor.

Sunday, December 4, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.
Annual Holiday Tea and opening reception for "Antique Toys: Childhood Treasures."

Wednesday, December 21
"Antique Toys: Childhood Treasures" closes in Galleries A, C, and D.

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Members are invited to make donations of materials having historical and cultural significance for Southern Appalachia and its people, as well as financial contributions to the Archives of Appalachia Fund and to the Tom Daniels Memorial Fund (for archive media projects). For further information contact (615)929-4338 or write Archives and Special Collections, Box 70665, ETSU, Johnson City, TN 37614-0665.

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Please make checks payable to the specific fund named.

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Members are invited to all FORM meetings, receive the center newsletter, and member rates on programs, study tours, and other activities of the museum.

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****A Southern Appalachian Reader*** - edited by Nellie McNeil and Joyce Squibb. An anthology of fiction, poetry, and essays. An excellent text for high school and college classes. $14.95.

In Place - A collection of Appalachian writers edited by Ronald K. Giles. Contemporary fiction and poetry. $9.95.

****Looking for Native Ground: Contemporary Appalachian Poetry*** - by Rita Simms Quillen. A study of four poets. $5.50.

Some Ballad Folks - by Tom Burton. Pioneering study of traditional ballad singers from Beech Mountain, N.C. Book - $6.50, accompanying tape - $5.00.

One For The Higger: Jack Higgs, A Man For All Seasons - edited by Lyle I. Olsen. Festschrift - a collection of articles by Higgs' collegues, former students, and friends. $10.00.

Recordings

DOWN AROUND BOWMANTOWN: PORTRAIT OF A MUSICAL COMMUNITY IN NORTHEAST TENNESSEE Features remastered non-commercial disc recordings made in the late 1930s and early 1950s in Washington County, Tenn. Side two features recent digital recordings of some of the same musicians. Extensive notes and photos. Selected by the Library of Congress as one of the best recordings of folk music in 1989. Available in album and cassette (Please specify). $10.00.

EAST TENNESSEE STATE BLUEGRASS BAND Features original recordings along with old favorites. First recording by any university bluegrass band anywhere. Available in album and cassette. $10.00 for cassette. *Special Album Sale* - $8.00.

*These items were published in cooperation with the Appalachian Consortium Press and may also be obtained through the Appalachian Consortium, University Hall, Appalachian State Univ., Boone, NC 28606.

Additional detailed information about books, recordings, and back issues of *Now & Then* is available from the center. Please write, call, or fax for more information. Phone and fax: 615 929-5348.

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SEMINARIANS STUDY REGIONAL ISSUES

For three weeks in June, the center hosted a group of Catholic seminarians from the Diocese of Knoxville. The center provided an educational program on Appalachian culture that included lectures, films, field trips, and performances. **Tim Stafford**, a regional historian and musician, served as coordinator for the sessions.

The seminarians, including one person from Ireland and one person from Ghana, studied such Appalachian issues as labor and industry relationships, religious diversity, health and family relationships, environmental conservation, ethnic contributions to Appalachian culture, Appalachian music, dance, literature, and storytelling, as well as the development of images and ideas about Appalachia and their effects on the region.

The group took field trips to a coal mine, local churches, the Carter Fold, the Sequoyah Museum, the Museum of Appalachia, a TVA facility, and participated in retreats and work sessions throughout the region.

The training program was funded by the Bishop of the Diocese of Knoxville and may become an ongoing part of regional seminarian education. ◆

Heritage, continued from p. 1

efforts, each of the 64 students received a copy of her book, *Tennessee: A History*, compliments of the Coca-Cola bottling company. Visits to the Netherland Inn, Exchange Place, Greeneville, and Jonesborough enhanced the students' understanding of the area's historical significance.

Tony Galloway, a teacher at Dobyns-Bennett High School in Kingsport, Tenn. and a previous instructor in the summer school, added to his Governor's School responsibilities by acting as the program facilitator/co-director for the first time this year. "I never realized how much time and effort go into the details of making a program like this work," said Galloway. Planning has already begun for the 1995 Governor's School, which should continue to "improve with age." ◆

WANTED: AUTHORS

The spring issue of *Now & Then* will focus on the "Environment and Appalachia"; for the summer issue, *Now & Then* examines "Music in Appalachia." Anyone interested in contributing fiction, poetry, non-fiction articles, essays, interviews, or photographs for either issue can request a copy of writers' guidelines by contacting Jane Woodside at *Now & Then*, CASS/ETSU, Box 70556, Johnson City TN 37614-0556. The staff welcomes submissions and proposals for either issue at any time; absolute deadlines are November 1 for the environment issue and February 1 for the music issue. However, early submissions may have a better chance of being placed. ◆

Woodside Elected Chair Of State Writer's Group

Jane Harris Woodside, center assistant director, was re-elected to a year term as chair of the Tennessee Writers Alliance at its July Board of Directors meeting.

TWA was launched in 1991 as a state-wide network for published and the not-yet published writer in all genres and for those who support writing, including librarians, teachers, editors, readers, bookstore owners, and publishers. Among its regularly scheduled activities are the publication of a newsletter, the staging of special events at the **Southern Festival of Books** each October in Nashville, and the sponsorship of writing workshops, panels, and readings in each of Tennessee's grand divisions. Together with the center, TWA will be sponsoring a **writing workshop in Johnson City** in early November. In 1993, TWA inaugurated an writing contest featuring a different genre each year.

Annual dues are $20 ($10 for full-time students). For more information or to obtain an application form, **contact Woodside** at the center (615)929-5348.◆

News CASS

Newsletter of the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services / East Tennessee State University

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NOW & THEN Poetry Contest Correction

Frederick Wilbur wrote to inform *Now & Then* of an error in the printing of his poem, "Reaping," which won an honorable mention in the Appalachian Writing Contest. The poem was published in the Summer 1994, 10th Anniversary Celebration issue. We regret the error and apologize to Wilbur. The correct version is as follows:

REAPING

Hay-colored, it flaps
on the side of a bale
like the wing of a roadkill
and when we come round again,
killing the tractor,
we jump close to see
a hundred dollar bill
bound up with alfalfa and fescue.
Do we leave it there
to fetch the neighbor as witness
or will it vanish
like a quail, flushed and flown?

—Frederick Wilbur

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The Unbecoming Gods

B.E. Railsback

An archeological dig brings excitement to the small Appalachian town of Cataloochee. But for Eli Waring, creating new life is the only reason for celebration.

Nancy Earnest

According to the *Cataloochee Herald*, the Princess of the Dig reigns just a half mile from my house. Anita Boggs. Seven-year-old paraplegic who, keeping lower to the ground than anyone else, found the first arrowhead and pottery fragment, delicate artifacts she held up to her father, the professor of archeology, artifacts that stopped all four Caterpillars from planing the ground and postponed the construction of Cataloochee Elementary School. Anita's find brought people paid by the state of North Carolina who mapped the area, found patterns of darkened earth, and discovered a Woodland Indian village, carbon dated 700 A.D. A week later they found a Cherokee settlement, circa 1800, less than a hundred yards from the other site. The Princess was there that day, too. Just what reporters at the *Herald* live and die for; they ran Anita's photo again, in four-color on the front page.

Each time I pull off the highway onto my road, coming home from the college, I look over my shoulder at the turn and see her sitting on the scraped red clay. The yellow dozers are scattered about, silent, blades bowed down. People walk over the field, heads down, marking spots. Each day they put more white trash bags of selected earth in rows; the field reminds me of a military cemetery, without the grass.

Three days after Anita's discovery the *Herald* reported the first burial pit. Thought I'd go out on one of these early spring evenings and see the wood-colored Native American bones they dug up: craniums, femurs, and hips. But the future principal announced that North Carolina will let the school keep some artifacts in a lobby display case: 17 arrowheads chipped from quartz, a jigsaw pot as thin as eggshell, and even a fully assembled skull. Somehow the thought of all that stuff under glass in an air-conditioned foyer, lying under a bulletin board papered over with mimeographed announcements of fund raisers and PTO meetings — that sinks some of the romance a bit, deflates my imagination. Still, I catch glimpses of the Princess over my shoulder.

This evening she was on the local news; the Asheville station sent a crew out at high noon, with Anita Boggs looking up into the camera and the sun, holding the glinty, clear quartz arrowhead — the first one she found and the only one she could keep. A smiling little girl with long saffron-colored hair, she reclined on the earth with other children about her, their little legs bouncing in and out of view. The reporter asked Anita what she thought about being such an important archeologist and you could tell this is what reporters at Newswatch 6 live and die for. And all enough to make me walk half a mile.

So I pulled on hiking boots, and sat on the front steps of my porch, looking down the road as far as the big white farmhouse. Eli Waring lives there, less than a quarter mile from me — my only neighbor in our little valley. When I had come out from Los Angeles two years ago to take my job in the political science department, I needed a cheap place, so the realtor took me to the outer edge of Cataloochee, where the scattered houses sell slowly, hanging on the lower edge of the price range. I had looked at the realtor with a smile when we approached the big white house, glowing in the summer sun with its hard ivory

paint sideboard, its wide porch, and lead-colored tin roof. The realtor shook his head slightly to say, son, this isn't the one, and we drove on. I looked back and saw a small, wiry woman in shorts and T-shirt, cutting tomatoes from tangled vines in her garden. A big hair clip gathered her yellow hair in back, a glittering piece of polished silver the size of a belt buckle. The sun hit it just right and the reflection burned my eyes.

"That's Eli Waring," the realtor had said. "She lives out here alone." When I think about it now, he must have read a longing look in my face and knew, before we came to my little place, that he had made a sale. My house has a stone base slapped together in crazy angles, with the bedroom and bathroom broken slightly from the rest of the house, tilting away, ready to slide down the grassy slope. In the slanting bedroom, when I had wondered aloud if you could roll a glass up the floor — it has the disorienting effect of the Winchester House in San Jose — the realtor told me the house's relation to Eli Waring. Her family owns the entire valley and the mountain above it, 350 acres, and she is the last of the line. Her great-grandparents had the big house built in 1903, and built my place for the hired help in 1936. Eli, alone, wanted to sell it, the only property her family had released in a century.

Later, when the realtor had opened his briefcase and we looked over the contracts, he spoke romantically of the peace and seclusion of the valley. After all had been signed and the house was mine, only then had he told me, "Now, don't expect too much from Miss Waring; she's an artist at the college, you know, and she's a bit closed off."

I sat on the porch, clicking the heels of my boots, watching her house. Inviting Eli to walk with me to the dig was to be done with care. After I had moved in, I waited a few months for her to come up and see me. We waved to each other as I drove by — she stays outdoors often. But she never visited. I figured she might want to see what I did to the house (which, aside from having my furniture moved in, wasn't much). That first summer I timed her movements, knew when she came out to work on the garden or walk up into the mountains from the trail behind her house. I looked for Eli at the university but never saw her; once I tracked down her office and walked by. She wasn't in.

At nights, from my porch, I watch the lights go on and off in the white house, figuring which rooms she uses and which she doesn't. (She keeps to the upper floor.) Some winter nights I've sat outside with a warm mug of Ovaltine in my hands, watching the lights make long streaks of yellow on the moon-colored snow, long arms fading away a quarter mile from my doorstep.

The first Christmas I had watched for cars pulling up in front of her house. There were none. That made me feel better, a little kinship toward her, because my relations live on the California coast, and I can never afford the airfare to join them. I bought a $29.95 Festive Feast Bucket from the local Bi-Lo. The mail-order carols on disc filled my house, and I let their digital notes blow me out the door, pushing me as I staggered down the road, my arms heavy with a plastic green basket full of foil-wrapped holiday cheer.

I had stood at Eli Waring's door, balancing a carton of homogenized premium egg-nog on the sweating polystyrene lid of my Feast Bucket, wondering if it would be thank you at the door and microwave macaroni (my fall-back) for me at home. Eli smiled, took me in, put the Bi-Lo dinner aside and served up turkey, cornbread dressing, mashed potatoes, snapped beans, and pickled beets at the long table in the dining room. We enjoyed the meal, ridiculed the college administration like pros, bantered like friends. When it was done she packed me up with goodies and sent me up the road. I waddled to my door with a full stomach, all my Bi-Lo goods, a jar of her blackberry jam, and no invitation to come back.

I had seen in her bright face and joyous smile something a bit less than brightness and joy. That something told me to select the timing of my visits carefully, to have a good reason for knocking on her door, to leave her alone for long intervals. Maybe it's nothing more than the fact that she always ends a session with good-bye, never come back again or see you later. So it's gone, for nearly two years, until tonight.

Having not exchanged a word with Eli in a month or so, I had banked up some time to spend with her. I had a good reason for visiting: an invitation to see a Princess and Indian skulls. I clicked my boots one more time, stood up, cinched my belt a notch too tight, adjusted the cap down over my bald spot, and walked through the trees.

You can walk down the road and get to her house faster, but I needed a little inspiration, so I cut through the trees between her place and mine. During that Christmas dinner, when Eli had sipped plenty of her rummed eggnog, she told me about those trees. Just before Eli's father died, when the land didn't matter much to him, he hired a crew to cut down all the huge old hardwoods on his property, except for a few tulip poplars around the houses. He hadn't told Eli. When she came home from college to tend to his funeral, to bury her last relation, she found all the trees were gone. She told me that the old growth forest of her memories, the cool theater where she played the only child, had been whacked off, made into furniture down at the factories in Hickory. The old man had planted a crop; there among the tall weeds of late fall, Eli had found the tiny firs. Christmas trees. She decided to go with his plan, and has leased the land to a farmer ever since. She likes Christmas tree farming, because the crews come to kill weeds, spray chemicals, trim trees, or harvest at irregular intervals. They never come to the house. The farmer sends her a big check when he makes his sales in Florida each December. She never

can remember his name, she tells me.

It's a great feeling to walk among a forest of trees only waist high. They fill the valley bottom and go all the way to each ridge top, and in spring they twitter with nesting birds and cast shadows over the crawling wild strawberries. As I walked to her house this evening, taller than all the deepening shadows of the waning day, I felt big. Since no one watched, I could swagger, puff myself up and growl deeply at finches and rabbits. When I reached her house, which swallowed me in its gaping porch, I stopped growling and knocked gently on the door.

"Hey." She answered, blowing a lock of hair above a dab of red paint on her forehead. She has a studio somewhere in the house, and works often in it, but I have never seen the room.

"How about a walk down the road?"

She raised her eyebrows, saying "why?" without a word.

"I mean, down to the dig site. Have you heard about it?"

"I've been there," she smiled, looking at a swath of yellow acrylic on the tops of her knuckles. "Last weekend I helped them do some work."

"Oh. Well, I haven't been there yet."

She nodded.

"Did you meet the Princess?" I threw out a little enticing mystery.

"Anita Boggs? Yes, I did. Nice girl."

I looked down, trying to think of some reason she should go. "Well, uh, you know I think they found another burial pit, probably a whole pile of skulls. Imagine."

She laughed. "You really want me to walk with you, right?"

"Just a short one."

"You get lonely." Eli wiped the red spot with her hand, looking at me from under her palm. She spoke about loneliness as if it were an illness.

"Okay. Come in while I put on my boots."

The house has high ceilings, and every room I've seen she's painted eggshell white. Nothing hangs on the walls: no family photos, no traces of her past, and none of her art work. I don't know what she does with it, or what she paints. Maybe it's all upstairs, or maybe it's in a gallery somewhere in New York.

The parlor is big and open; Eli likes space. One ficus grows high in a corner, and she has trimmed it so only its upper branches remain, spreading out along the ceiling. There's no couch, only two antique straight-backed chairs and a coffee table. This evening I saw some literature on the table, picked up a large notebook, and looked at it.

Santa Barbara Cryogenics. I flipped the page. Artificial Insemination Program. Now when you come across something like this in someone's house you can be virtuous and put it down, and pretend you never saw it. Or you can listen carefully to make sure no one is coming, looking though it as fast as a teenager rifles through the erotica at Walden's. My ears felt like they slightly lifted, I listened so hard for her footsteps, but then I skimmed pages about the limits of liability, the need for confidentiality, the cautions that no donor could be traced and all records would be destroyed. Then pages and pages of terse descriptions, like: "Caucasian. Pre-med student. 6 feet. Blue eyes. Curly black hair. 24 years." They all seemed to be like that: tall scientific guys. Successful California dudes who watched a porn flick in a dark room and dropped a little magic into a cup. Had it frozen, and walked away. When you look through a book like this, you can't help but write your own description. I didn't want to, but it was in my head: "Caucasian. Hapless poli-sci instructor at unheralded college." Okay so far. But: "5 feet 7 inches. Balding. Overweight. Never tans. Kidney stones. 39 years." Uh oh.

"I'm trying to have a baby." Eli walked in and I pitched the notebook back on the table, thinking how close we were coming to immaculate conception.

The girl spoke quickly, words on the deep inhale and exhale, like someone back from a long lonely trip, who hasn't spoken to anyone but the ticket takers, fast-food cashiers, and motel clerks.

Across the road, on the site, we followed a deep trench line. The *Herald* quoted an engineer as saying they were having trouble draining the ground in preparation for construction. Trenches criss-crossed the 50-acre site, all deepening at a point of convergence, like the head of a dark rake, near the Tuckaseegee River. I looked down into a trench, the gray and yellow bottom mud pocked by rocks people had tossed into it. A thin film of water on the surface did not reflect the red twilight. Eli and I made no reflection either.

We did not talk, strolling along until we met the Princess, who sat before the blade of a big dozer. Anita wore bib overalls, her legs tucked under. She had spread out various artifacts on a cloth. Two little boys stood over her, shifting their feet, looking every now and then at the big pile of dirt and rocks the tractors had made. One suddenly ran off toward the heap, as if magnetically drawn to it; he broke off in the middle of Anita's lecture. The other boy took a step; I heard her say, "Wait, here's another." She held something else up, but the boy was already looking after his friend, and his little legs danced at the chance to run while he absently fingered his crotch. His friend had topped the pile of dirt and put his arms in the air, which was too much for the other boy's legs, and off he went while Anita said again, "Here's one more."

She turned to us.

"They don't know about science," she said.

"I know," Eli nodded. "What about you?"

"This," she looked into Eli's eyes and then mine as she held up a triangular piece of white rock, "may be the point of a spear, which I found today."

"Why not just a piece of rock broken by a bulldozer?" Eli held it.

Anita went into a long, fast explanation about the pattern of chipping evident on the rock. She made Eli feel the tapered edge on one side. The girl spoke quickly, words on the deep inhale

and exhale, like someone back from a long lonely trip, who hasn't spoken to anyone but the ticket takers, fast-food cashiers, and motel clerks. Like someone who comes back with stories pent up until there is finally an audience, and it all pours out at last. I wanted to get a word in, so I cut off a lecture about the way Native Americans made cutting tools.

"Listen," I said, kneeling down beside her, smiling. "I saw you on the news. I guess you know what they're calling you."

She looked down, suddenly quiet.

My face felt hot. These days it's embarrassing to compliment someone; you can't say to a little kid, 'Hey, you must be the Princess of the Dig.' It's just too sentimental. Even Anita looked embarrassed.

"Let's go," Eli tapped my shoulder.

"No, wait, let me show you some other things I found."

"That's okay." Eli took a step. "Maybe we'll come back this way. It's getting dark, and I want to see how the work is going by the river."

Anita looked at me, keeping her eyes on me.

Eli started walking.

"I'll come back," I said.

Anita watched me quietly as I stood up. I thought of offering to carry her over to everyone else, but remembered I could get in trouble for handling a little girl.

Eli picked up her pace.

I shifted weight from one foot then to the other. "I've got to go, but I'll be back." I started to trot after Eli.

Eli wanted me to know something. This was the first time the tone in her voice sounded serious, a tone you reserve for someone close, not just an acquaintance.

As we walked away, Anita went out of view, hidden behind the big scoop of the dozer.

"She's a very smart girl," I said.

"She is."

"I can't believe she's out there alone right now," I whispered; we were close to the men working by the Tuckaseegee. "I mean, it's getting dark. And here's this seven-year-old girl, sitting out there, right by the edge of a trench full of deep mud. What's her father thinking? It's really unbelievable."

"Not really," Eli said. "Better be quiet."

They had set up a long-tom, pumping water up from the river to run over the dirt piled in the slough. Bits of pottery and tools lay on a wire screen nearby. One man stood by the chugging water pump, drinking a beer, while another man buried his hands in the water, occasionally pulling up a rock and tossing it away. The man by the pump was Dr. Boggs, the Princess's father — I'd seen him at college committee meetings. The other was, I guessed, a Cherokee. He was stripped to the waist, his black hair cut in a line over his forehead, eyes hidden in dark sunglasses — he must have been nearly blind in the twilight.

"Hey, Eli," he said.

Like some Cherokee in western North Carolina, he had a southern accent. I'm used to the Navajo out west; when they speak they have a thin reedy sound in their English, an accent that seems to be their own — you can feel the intonations of their language just under the surface. Cherokee here can sound like that, and some are said to never see white men, to ignore their existence, but others have a southern accent. I don't know why some sound like Southerners and see white men and others don't.

"How's the dig going?" Eli asked.

"Same damn thing. Nine hours a day, five dollars an hour. Gets dull sifting through this shit."

"It's eight o'clock, Rex!" Dr. Boggs tossed his beer can into a trench and turned off the pump. "Let's pack it up."

Rex pulled his hands out of the long tom, shaking them as we all watched the water ebb from the slough. While Boggs pulled a portable chest of drawers from the back of his pickup, Rex, Eli, and I looked over the neat columns of bags on the field by the river. Each bag had a mark scrawled on it, such as "N.E. Q #4," and they stood out against the dark earth like ghosts, rank and file. The emptied bags made a heap by the tom.

"These two villages were small," Rex said.

"Compared to what?" Eli asked.

"One that used to be where the college stadium is now."

"Hey, Rex," Boggs slid a drawer out of the chest, which was marked "State of North Carolina." "I gotta get Anita. Make sure all the tags are secure."

"She's out by that deep trench over there," I told him. I could have said by the bulldozer, but this man needed to be reminded of the deep trench.

"I know," he walked off. "Anita's been there an hour now — says she's gonna make another find."

Rex solemnly filled the drawer with tagged artifacts. Anita came back, thrown over her father's shoulder, her head bobbing. He put her in the cab of the truck and strapped her in. Then Rex heaved the chest into the back of the truck and jumped in after it. Eli and I stood near the spot where the deepest trench almost met the Tuckaseegee but did not touch; they had put up a makeshift dam of loose gravel between them. The truck bumped and jerked over the tough clay, and when it was gone, we only heard the river behind us.

"You haven't seen the dig site yet," Eli said.

"No."

"I'll show you."

We walked to a rise in the field near the river, where the red earth had been polished by the archaeologists — brushed clean. Two large ovals stood out among the chipped and clodded ground the dozers had worked over. A big yellow Cat hung back from the ovals, glowing under the rising moon, waiting for the contractor's order to resume.

"That's the site of the Cherokee village," she pointed to an oval about half the size of a football field. "The one we're standing on is the most interesting. Woodland Indians of 700 A.D. No one knows much about them."

"Closed off," I said, looking at the bore holes the archaeolo-

gists had made. We had come to the edge of a larger hole, about the size of an open coffin.

"What do you mean?"

"They don't tell us much."

"Right." Eli smiled.

"Was this a burial pit?"

"No." She sat on the edge. "This was a trash pit. They found charcoal and broken pottery here. I guess this was a landfill."

"Not very big." I sat next to her, noticing that the clay was rubbed smooth — everything had been scooped out. I wore trousers, but she wore shorts, her thin legs whitening under the moonlight. The yellow of her hair softened. The sky had darkened enough that it would be hard for her to see my eyes, and so I took a long sideways look at Eli.

For the first time in our nearly two years' acquaintance, we were not in her house or her yard. But still in our valley, without anyone around — hardly a car passing on the highway. Fireflies did not venture out over the scraped clay, but up by her house and all along the edge of the construction site, they woke up and lit out for the solitude of the sky. Now the rabbits would be out, maybe a possum or two, sniffing in the fields by the house or down in the Christmas trees. And I had that giant feeling again, except now Eli and I were both giants.

"It's quiet."

"It is." She crossed her legs; I wondered if she felt the slight chill in the air. I smelled the dank odor of turned earth, and my feet felt cool.

We had said nothing about her maternal scheme. She was so unused to having people by that I figured she never even thought about the notebook on her coffee table. She did not seem to mind my finding it.

"So. I guess you're having a baby?"

"I'm not pregnant yet."

She looked at me, and I wanted to see what was in her face; her voice, usually relaxed, seemed tense. Eli wanted me to know something. This was the first time the tone in her voice sounded serious, a tone you reserve for someone close, not just an acquaintance. I slid my hand along the ground, close to her.

"I'm 37 years old, in perfect health, and I want a child."

"That's wonderful," I said, hoping to assure her that I thought artificial insemination was the most natural thing in the world.

"It's a good program. I see the doctor once a month until something happens. I choose the donor, and they all live in California — far from here. With this company they promise all records will be destroyed within a decade. You can't trace ..."

"Why do you want them from California?" I almost touched her leg, feeling the grit on my fingers.

"Because they are so far away." She looked right into my face, lips pulled back into a tight white smile.

"What difference does it make?" I looked away, studying the progress of fireflies. "I mean, aren't they faceless whether they're in California or North Carolina? There's nothing special about them. I know — I'm from California."

"The point is, they're far away. You may be from California, but you're here now."

"I don't mean to bring myself into it." It felt hard to look at her; I wanted to stare down into the hole.

"Let's bring you into it for a moment."

She had become very big now, seemed blown up while my head began to pound. Her head eclipsed the moon.

"You need to understand that you're my neighbor."

"What?"

"You're too close." She craned her head forward, looking at me like a teacher hoping the student is getting the point. "People always ask me how I can stand living alone out here. They keep looking for my relationship, keep hoping I'll find someone. But I'm fine."

"That's great for you."

Her lips parted at that. Not smiling, she looked closer into my face. She tried again.

"I don't want a father in my house. Or anything like a father. That's the point."

"I never . . ." Here I stopped, because I had to look down with my head hurting. She had seen all of my little fantasies, of our times in our valley, her valley, and she had seen ahead to ideas her program of artificial insemination would no doubt have given me sometime later tonight. In fact, thoughts I have now. All my ideas about her seemed suddenly intrusive and she made me feel like I always do around quiet people when I can't help but fill the air with light chitchat and those quiet people watch, waiting for me to stop.

"What about love?" I mumbled, and it sounded as dumb and familiar as a tired line from a popular song.

"Good question." Eli had already slipped back into the acquaintance tone, and she stood up.

Our eggshell pottery relationship broke there, and I thought I should admire her. She had learned something, and her self-containment was more a part of the world than my romps among the Christmas trees and my jingly pop-40 ideas.

She walked away.

I slid into the pit and looked up at the night sky. My head pounded so hard the dirt that cradled the base of my skull felt like it had a pulse. Closing my eyes, I could see Anita Boggs strapped tight in her seat while her father silently eyed the rearview mirror. I saw Eli Waring walking calmly over the burial grounds, leaving the 700 A.D. village, walking across the graves of the 1800 A.D. Cherokee, and onward, less than a half mile to her 1903 farmhouse, taking a giant's easy stride across the centuries.

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by Jane Harris Woodside

Definitely Not Your Average Hollywood Indians

Appalachia's Native Americans invite their neighbors to Trade, Tenn., to come see what Pow Wows — and their heritage — are all about.

It's a cool Saturday evening in the mountains of Johnson County, Tenn., a stone's throw from the North Carolina line. Tony Richards, a Lakota Sioux dressed in black T-shirt and blue jeans, leans over the rail of a wooden pavilion at the Trade Days Festival.

"It's Pow Wow time," he intones into a hand-held microphone.

Forty-one-year-old Richards of Bristol, Tenn., is a professional Pow Wow dancer, organizer, and craftsperson. On this June weekend, he is acting as emcee for five Pow Wow exhibitions — all of which are part of the larger Trade Days Festival. This three-day, community celebration attracts over 40,000 people annually and features everything from pig races to Civil War reenactments. Some variation of Native American Pow Wow has been a part of the festival since its beginning in 1989.

Pow Wows are multi-tribal gatherings where Native Americans forge a common ethnic identity — one that both recognizes and transcends tribal affiliations. Dance, rooted in the traditions of many North American tribes, is the focus. Typically, these events combine open social dances with specialty dance competitions in which highly skilled dancers vie for substantial prize money. Fancy and traditional dance constitute the two main competitive categories, with fancy dance being a more recent and showy version of the older traditional forms.

Especially since the 1970s, Pow Wows have proliferated. Currently there are about 1,000 events conducted annually in the United States and Canada.

The Opening Procession

"Please stand for the Grand Entry," Richards instructs the audience as a procession of dignitaries and dancers enters the arena. One of the dignitaries is Richards' own uncle, Jimmy Dubray, a Lakota medicine man who has come from South Dakota to preside over the Pow Wow. All are led by an honor guard, the Tsalagi Warriors of Cherokee, N.C., dressed in jungle camouflage. They dance rather than march — stomping their feet, punctuating their movements with fierce cries, and holding aloft rifles, eagle staffs, and an assortment of American and Cherokee flags.

After the honor guard and dignitaries, the dancers appear in the prescribed order. They are accompanied by the Pass Creek Drum — a collection of men who sit around a large drum under a brush arbor (a shelter in the middle of the arena formed by four tree trunks that support a lattice, brush-covered roof). The young men pound out an emphatic beat and sing the high-pitched chants they have culled from various Native American tribal traditions.

Men's traditional dancers in their relatively subdued regalia come first. They are still, in Richards' words, "into the leather and the feathers, nothing really bright or colorful." Drawing upon the traditional dance of many different tribes, men's traditional dancers move to a slow drum beat, acting out stories about war or the hunt. Next come the men's fancy dancers. "You're going to see all these pretty feathers and pink and purple and green fluffs," Richards explained a few days before Trade Days' opening. "It's a fast, fast drum beat. You'll see their feet moving like pistons. They're twirling and swirling. It's just like a blur out there."

The female dancers adhere to the same order. The women's traditional dancers enter first, wearing either fringed buckskin of the Northern tribes or cloth, tunic-like dresses of Southern tribes and dancing with a slow, dignified step. They are followed by the women's fancy dancers, wearing shawls and silk in various shades of purple, orange, and brilliant blue. Extending their fringed shawls like wings, they dance energetically in tight circles as they orbit the arbor.

Finally, the distinctive jingle dress dancers appear. Tracing their origins to Ojibwa healing rituals, jingle dancers adorn their dresses with rows of metal cones fashioned out of snuff cans or Mason jar lids that clang delicately as they dance.

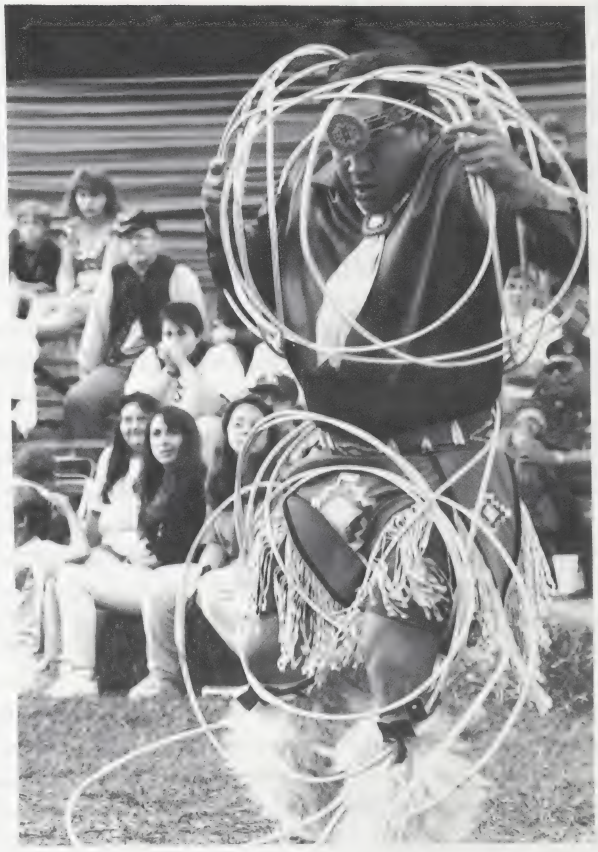
Following the processional, Richards leads off the dancing by calling for an Intertribal, which features each Native American dancer performing his or her particular dance specialty. The Intertribals give the audience a chance to preview what is to come. Later, Richards announces a Round Dance, inviting the spectators to join the Indian dancers in a circular formation with all moving in unison using a simple side step. Scattered among such social dances are specialty dances, such as the elegant rendition of the Eagle Dance and two Hoop Dances executed by a male dancer and his two daughters. During the latter, the dancer gathers up hoops scattered on the ground and fashions them into various figures — a flower, an eagle's wings, the earth —

moving continuously all the while.

Finally, the Pow Wow exhibition concludes with a Victory Dance where everyone, audience members included, dance to honor the Sioux's defeat of Custer.

The Pow Wow Tradition

The term *Pow Wow* comes from the Algonquian word meaning "medicine man," and the festivities themselves have a long history. According to Richards, who hails originally from South Dakota's Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, they evolved directly from the traditional gatherings of the Plains Indians, of tribes such as the Lakota, the Cheyenne, and the Arapaho. "They would get together at one place and dance and have contests: horse racing, different types of games," he said. "Then different tribes began coming in — the Cherokee, the Seminole, the Choctaw, and Navajo. Originally, they didn't wear all the feathers to their festivals, but now they all wear Plains Indian style."



Jane Harris Woodside

A Hoop Dancer performs during Trade Days.

The Pow Wows Richards remembers from his own South Dakota childhood were small-scale affairs, homecomings where people returned to the reservation to dance and visit relatives and friends. These intimate gatherings did not involve prize money, only the giving of gifts such as a horse or blanket. Today, however, the stakes are considerably higher, with top awards ranging from around $200 to $2,000.

Appalachia hosts its share of Pow Wows, with several hundred taking place in the region annually. It was in the early 1970s that the first Pow Wows were held on the Qualla Boundary Reservation of western North Carolina, home of the Eastern Band of the Cherokee. Since then, this transplanted tradition has taken hold, and today there are major Pow Wows in Cherokee, N.C., over both the Memorial Day and Fourth of July weekends. For some Native Americans, traveling the Pow Wow circuit has virtually become a way of life. One Cherokee family reported that over a recent six-month season, they had attended a Pow Wow practically every weekend, traveling as far north as Wisconsin and as far south as Oklahoma.

Smaller Pow Wows also occur in non-Native American communities such as Pikeville, Ky., Sevierville, Tenn., and Gastonia, N.C. Why do non-Native American Appalachian communities sponsor Pow Wows? In the case of Trade, the inspiration came from the small rural community's early history. The town is the oldest registered settlement in Tennessee, a spot where Indians and settlers once met to bargain and swap goods. Because the festival's organizers wanted to make Trade's Indian heritage a major aspect of the event, full-scale competitive Pow Wows were held the first five years — but across the state line in North Carolina. These early events awarded up to $24,000 in prize money and attracted dancers from distant cities.

A Case In Point

The Trade Days Festival is a good example of how a Pow Wow can be adapted into a simpler, Native American event. After the first five years of the Trade Pow Wow, the festival committee concluded that in spite of the substantial prize money offered, there simply weren't enough dancers in some categories. "We were awarding $800 to $900 for first place, but in some cases, we only had three or four dancers entered into a particular category," recounted Bob Morrison, a Mountain City, Tenn., resident and Trade Days committee member. Also, audience members often left before seeing the best dancers since they typically appeared last on the program. Due to these factors, Trade transformed its Indian Pow Wow into Indian Days, featuring a Pow Wow-style presentation rather than an all-out competition. The organizers also moved the Native American dancing from North Carolina to the main festival site in Tennessee.

Richards supplied a pragmatic answer to the question of why Pow Wows are found in Appalachian communities. They bring business to the communities involved, he said. Native Americans fill up motel rooms and frequent local restaurants. But Morrison isn't convinced that economic benefits are ultimately that compelling. "It's a draw for our crowd," he conceded. "But if all we did at Trade was to put on a Pow Wow, we wouldn't have the crowds we do. So I really believe a lot of the organizers' motivation is an interest in our heritage."

Pow Wows are multi-tribal gatherings where Native Americans forge a common ethnic identity — one that both recognizes and transcends tribal affiliations.

When Morrison talks about "our" heritage, he is, in fact, referring to himself. His own great-grandmother was Cherokee, a large-statured woman known as "Big Grandma." The pride Morrison has in his own Cherokee ancestry leads him

to attend many Pow Wows, and he is also active in the Boy Scouts' Order of the Arrow, a service organization that borrows some Native American traditions, including dance. Many people in Northeast Tennessee, he says, are only beginning to acknowledge and have a sense of pride in their own Native American heritage. Changing the old stereotypes is also a Morrison objective. "I still find many people who think that the Indians worship some pagan god," he said. "It was a great interest of mine to bring Pow Wows into this area ... to see them up close, to realize that their (the Indian) philosophy of life is not that different from our philosophy of life."

There's no doubt that Pow Wows have built a broader appreciation and respect for all Indian traditions. And they have also served as a connecting force for Native Americans everywhere: "When you go to a Pow Wow, it's like getting together and celebrating our togetherness, our union," observed Richards' cousin Blanche White Face. Now living in Bristol, Tenn., White Face grew up mostly in Charlotte, N.C., having been adopted by a white family when she was small. She started attending Pow Wows in her teens and this year was named Trade Pow Wow's head lady. Together with the head man, she led all social dances and tended to the women dancers' needs.

In Appalachia, Pow Wows often bring together Native Americans who are scattered in communities throughout the region. In addition to the approximately 10,000 Cherokee living on the Qualla Boundary, there are other Cherokee and members of non-Appalachian tribes — such as the Hopi, the Zuni and the Lakota — who are attracted to the region by employment opportunities. Richards noted, "We can go to a Pow Wow, and somebody will say, 'Hey, where're you from?' Then we swap phone numbers and get to know each other."

The gatherings also give Native Americans an avenue for expressing other aspects of their culture. For example, the respect shown to veterans at Pow Wows reflects this group's valued place; both Indian and non-Indian veterans are invited to participate in certain rituals and dances. According to Richards, the emphasis reflects the depth of commitment Native Americans have for their homeland. "The Indians were considered second class citizens until around the 1950s, but during war, they were sure recruited," he said. "Indians fought because they always think of this as the motherland, and they wanted to defend their land."

Clearing the Air

There are good Pow Wows, and there are bad ones. A blatantly bad Pow Wow is one in which competitors dance for days, only to discover that the promised rewards never materialize. And there are some Native Americans, Richards and White Face included, who feel the events are often too commercialized and competitive, particularly in the eastern United States. "I got real upset the last Pow Wow I went to," said White Face. "I sat there and said, 'God, I just can't stand it any more. There's just so much animosity out there in the circle.' It's who can outdress the other, who's doing the traditions right, and who's not. We're supposed to have this unity among us, and it's like we're all going in separate directions."

Richards particularly objects to the inclusion of foreign-made crafts and wares in the booths that often encircle the dance arena. "It takes people like us so long to bead and make spears and drums," he pointed out. "We try to sell our drum for $100. Somebody else may have ordered theirs up from Mexico, and they're selling them for $25. Nine out of 10 people are going to buy the ones selling for $20 or $25."

Like Morrison, Richards sees Pow Wows as an opportunity to educate the public. "We want to show that we are not Hollywood Indians," he noted. It follows, then, that one of Richards' principle goals when he emcees a Pow Wow is to engage the audience. "You want to get the crowd involved. You don't want them to sit back and not feel wanted. I get up and tease the crowd. I just joke with everybody and get the kids involved. Then they're going to go home and tell their friends, their neighbors, their relatives, 'Hey, we really had a blast out there. You should come out. We danced, and we played games, and we had a good old time.'

"That's how I want my crowds to leave a Pow Wow. I want them telling everyone, 'The kids want to go back out tomorrow. *We* want to go back out tomorrow. Why don't you come join us and see what it's all about?'"

Jane Harris Woodside

Pow Wow dancers assemble prior to the Grand Entry.

Jane Harris Woodside is assistant director of the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services and associate editor of Now & Then. *She recently co-edited a book on vernacular dance called* Communities in Motion: Dance, Community, and Tradition in America's Southeast and Beyond, *due out in early 1995.*

Call of the Mountain Wild

by Doyle Bickers

From the time hunting and gathering began, hunters and fishers have fostered a haunting, humorous world of ritual and celebration.

A dangling branch brushed off my hat as the boat slipped quietly under a willow tree. It was my lucky hat so I grabbed it quickly to keep it from falling into the pond. The beam from my flashlight poked between cattails, logs, and rocks. The calls of a night bird echoed across the water, and I shivered slightly.

As I pushed the branch aside, a "whump" sounded from the bottom of the aluminum boat. The flashlight was taped to the barrel of my .22 rifle, so I swung the gun around to locate the source of the noise. A white patch below glowing eyes clearly identified the open mouth of a water moccasin that had dropped from the overhanging limb.

Without hesitation (a 13-year-old mind doesn't think about consequences), I shot the snake through the head. The reptile flopped across the bottom of the boat as my cousin screamed and struck wildly at the writhing form with a paddle — finally managing to flip the snake into the water.

All might have ended well had it not been for the small geyser of water that erupted from the floor beneath my feet. The bullet had passed cleanly through the snake and pierced the hull of my uncle's boat.

This is the true story of a frog hunting adventure that my cousin and I shared many years ago. It contains elements of several common rituals in the world of the Appalachian great outdoors — some of which are as old as the acts of hunting and gathering.

The material here is not intended as a serious analysis of the psychological or sociological implications of hunting and fishing. What I have pulled together is biased by my own perspective. Much of the meaning I find in my life comes from following a path that winds in and out of the woods and waters. It is the feelings, characters, and experiences that keep me pushing deeper into the hills and hollows in search of a smile, a thrill, or an answer.

— Doyle Bickers

Amulets and lucky charms, for example, are stock items for outdoor enthusiasts. In fact, you would be hard pressed to find someone prowling a stream without one. And as the story illustrated, my own lucky hat was of particular importance to me in those early hunting and fishing excursions.

Such stories are often told again and again, sometimes with great embellishment, when families come together for reunions, weddings, and funerals. Uncle John is begged to "tell the one about...," and eventually he takes a long draw on his pipe and agrees, "but you have to listen real close." In the world of the wild, traditional holidays also take on an added dimension. Thanksgiving turkey hunts, opening day fishing trips, a youngster's first gun at Christmas, or the first deer killed are all meaningful celebrations that are repeated by each new generation.

Besides the passing down of stories and rituals, we've also

Doyle Bickers

William Steele of Wise, Virginia, is passing on tradition and technique as he instructs his son Cody.

learned about some of the old hunting traditions through documentation. For example, in Horace Kephart's classic text, *Our Southern Highlanders,* we get a good idea of both the rigors and traditions of an early 20th century bear hunt: "I fell over a rock clift 20 feet down, and if't hadn't been for the laurel I'd a-bruk some bones. I landed right in the middle of them, bear and dogs, fightin' like gamecocks.... Hit was so dark I couldn't see my gun barrel, and we wuz all tangled up in greenbriers as thick as plow lines. I had to fire twiste afore he tumbled."

Kephart also relates the tall tales and superstitions of the hunting camp: "Fellers, you want to mark whut you dream about, tonight: hit'll shore come true to-morrow'.... There ensued a grave discussion of dreamlore.... If one dreamt of blood, he would surely see blood the next day. Another lucky sign for the hunter was to dream of quarreling with a woman, for that meant a she bear...."

Another ritual gives insight into the character of the hunters: "The mountaineers have an odd way of sharing the spoils of the chase. They call it 'stoking the meat,' a use of the word stoke that I have never heard elsewhere. The hide is sold and the proceeds divided equally among the hunters, but the meat is cut up into as many pieces as there are partners in the chase; then one man goes indoors or behind a tree, and somebody at the carcass, laying his hands on a portion, calls out: 'Whose piece is this?' ... Everybody gets what chance determines for him, and there can be no charge of unfairness."

Seasonal Rites

With each new season, a different set of outdoor-related rituals falls into place. Some are performed with the care of a religious observance. The first cool night at summer's end is a reminder to mend worn gear and to "sight in" the rifle. And spring fever is a virtual epidemic among folk of the outdoors. The season's approach (particularly the opening day of the trout season) brings dreams of slipping through the laurels along the edge of a tumbling stream. Trillium, violets, and Jack-in-the-pulpit line the banks and pop up on the edges of trails.

Winter, on the other hand, brings a different set of projects. There are a few hardy souls who are willing to brave the frigid waters and biting wind to cure a case of cabin fever. Other anglers, however, prefer to gather around wood stoves and fireplaces to swap stories, share techniques, or plan future outings. Winter is also the time for prowling through mail-order hunting catalogs or for cleaning tackle. Treasures long buried in the depths of a tackle box or fly vest are likely to be rediscovered. Amusingly, my wife refers to such activities as "playing with his toys." And the toys do bring their own pleasures, seeming to have a life independent of the sports themselves.

Over many years, a fisher or hunter can amass literally mounds of paraphernalia, such as waders, vests, rods, reels, lures, tools, boots, chemicals, clothing, tents, packs, stoves, knives, guns, and so on. None of which can be easily discarded. For what may appear to be a rusty cup or an odd rock to the uninitiated is really a time machine. When an angler picks it up, he or she feels the cold of the water or the wind blowing down the mountain, remembers the eagle that perched in a tree above the path, or how good the coffee tasted when brewed beside a brook.

Once in a great while, the person who spends time in the woods will have an "encounter" or a spiritual experience. These

Archives and Special Collections, ETSU, Beeson Collection, Mt. Mitchell Hike diary.

Dolph Wilson of Murcheson, North Carolina, posed for this picture in 1915, showing off his 100th bear.

A Mt. Mitchell Excursion

D.R. Beeson Sr. of Johnson City, Tenn., kept a diary during a two-day hiking and camping trip to Mt. Mitchell, N.C., in May 1915. Here are some excerpts.

Dolph Wilson killed his 100th bear this past winter but he traps the poor things and then shoots them without giving them any show at all. He is a famous hunter in these parts, a small man, bald and apparently quiet but not absolutely. He was born in 1861 in a log cabin near here and has lived pretty close (to) home all his life. His father was Big Tom Wilson, probably the most famous native of this section and one of the few I ever heard of that was not a grandson of Daniel Boone....

After a good sleep at Dolph's we ... reached the Mitchell Falls about 11 a.m. Dolph smelling out the trail like a hound and hitting the stream not a 100 feet above the falls, and he said he hadn't been there for nine years....

Well, after leaving the falls, we struck up a little ravine with about the same slope as a telegraph pole and, about noon, found a flat place big enough to eat dinner. Dolph acted sort of clannish and refused to eat any of our grub at all except one small biscuit; he sat on a log and ate what he had brought with him and was medium quiet for the first time since we started. I've seen men before who could walk up a steep mountain as fast as he can but have never known one before who could talk incessantly while doing it. I don't believe he knows what it is to get out of breath.

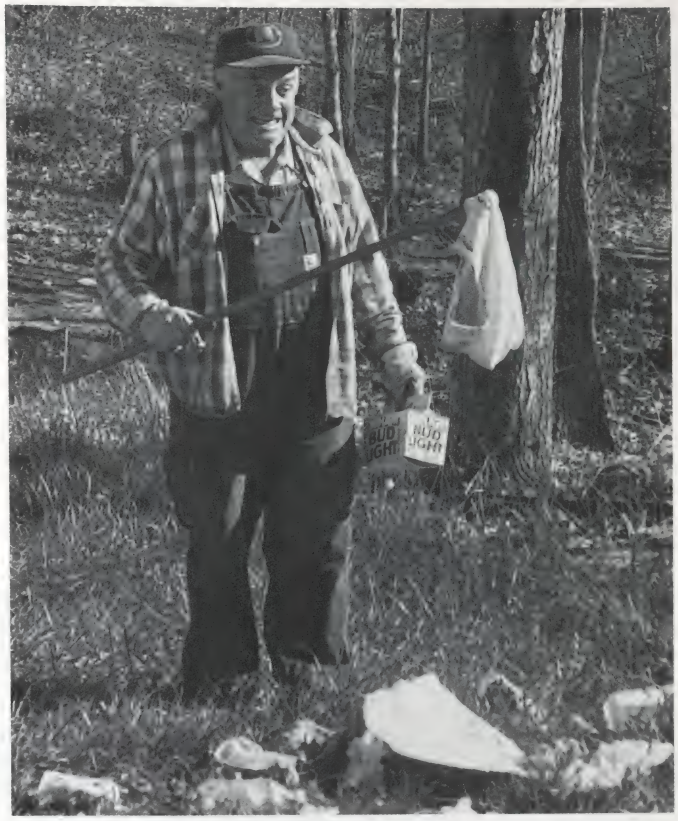
—Reprinted with permission from the D.R. Beeson Collection; Archives and Special Collections, Sherrod Library, East Tennessee State University.

encounters, which often occur in solitude, vary with every individual and take many forms. Sometimes it's an insight that comes after having sat for a long period, meditating on the beauty of a flower. For some, it is a message delivered by a spirit in the form of an animal. Or it may be simply a feeling that, in a world of suffering and chaos, there are moments of unexplained peace.

However it happens, most people look back on the event as having special, personal significance.

It's probably no surprise that today's children are still being taught the skills of the woods and waters by parents and mentors. Each new generation encounters the spirits of the wild in its own way. And if you listen closely, you can hear new conversations and voices addressing the value and essence of hunting and fishing.

There are those who question the appropriateness of these activities, forcing us to look closely at our motives and why we each seek our personal wilderness. The critics provide a balance against those who would abuse the privilege of going into the wild, while hunters and fishers themselves are changing with the times. Phrases like "catch and release" and "limit your kill, don't kill your limit" are becoming part of the language. And some hunters are taking trophies with cameras instead of with guns. Various organizations also are surfacing, like Trout Unlimited, that emphasize water resource reclamation, conservation, and education.



Doyle Bickers

W.G. Bays of Southwest Virginia lands a "keeper" in a stream cleanup program.

These mountains are fickle and change with each slant of light. The world I see in one range of pale violets is another world entirely in the first pools of morning's hazy blues. Things don't end so much as fade, dissolve, disappear, and reappear as something altogether different. Even the mountains come and go, affirming the wild rhythm of possibility and tendency rather than certainty.... Sometimes they remind me of lifeboats, there for anyone wanting to feel the palpable touch of solitude and solace against his skin.

— From *On the Spine of Time* by Harry Middleton

Well he's big across the middle, and
he's broad across the rump,
Runnin' ninety miles an hour, takin'
thirty feet a jump,
Ain't never been caught he ain't never
been treed,
Some folks say he looks a lot like me.

— From "Ole Slew Foot" by Edwin Manney, Howard Hausey, and James Webb

And when my boys get old enough, to learn
how to bait a hook and how to wade,
I think I'll take 'em fishing, and show them
where God stays....

— From "Fishing" by Cullowhee

Individual approaches

How each person approaches the wild is an individual matter. Nunn, the chief character in Harriette Arnow's novel *Hunter's Horn,* explains what drives him to hunt a particularly cunning fox called King Devil: "King Devil ran because he had to — he couldn't stop — he had to run; he was bewitched, Nunn was bewitched; they couldn't die, they couldn't stop; they lived in some God-damned bewitched world that other people didn't know about. King Devil had to run, and he had to follow — had to — had to — had to — ."

Perhaps a primitive urge surfaces in certain individuals or maybe it's as simple as how one is raised. Whatever the reason, we (hunters and fishers) have to be there — chasing, searching, watching, sensing, feeling — always a part of the water, wind, earth, and creatures that constantly flow around us. We celebrate, and we practice the rituals and traditions that have become a part of our psyche. The mountains call and we follow.

Doyle Bickers is the director of enrollment planning and services at Clinch Valley College of the University of Virginia. He is also a past president of the Appalachian Studies Association.

Unclean

It's the middle of a work day,
and somebody's taking a jackhammer
to the insides of my uterus.
I wish some silly white man
who looks like Moses
would hold his hand over my head
and pronounce me unclean,
send me out to a little cabin
in the woods so I wouldn't
pollute anybody,
and leave me all alone
to wallow on the floor and bleed.

But once he was gone,
I'd make myself a cup of tea,
and sit on the back porch and
listen to the phoebes while I think
about what it means to be the moon,
to contemplate wind and wing
in rich and welcome solitude.

— Rebecca Bailey

Rebecca Bailey's most recent publication is an anthology called The Kinks: Reflections on Thirty Years of Music *(from Trillium Publications). She lives in Rowan County, Ky.*

Courtesy of Archives and Special Collections, ETSU, University Photographic Archives

Queen of the May and her court, May Day celebration, East Tennessee State Normal School, circa 1913.

Becoming a Celebrant in Appalachia

by Anne Leibig

Sent as a nun to the southern mountains, a woman emerges to lead community celebrations.

Peyton Russo

Anne Leibig and Bible schoolers in Saint Paul, Va., in the early 1960s.

For many years, celebration has held a special place in my life. Today, I consider myself a true celebrant, although my path to assuming this role has taken many twists and turns.

My journey to Dungannon, Va., began many years ago, when I was a seventh-grader at Saint Mary Grade School in Corning, N.Y. I heard a story told by a Catholic missionary who had gone to Dungannon to conduct a funeral Mass in a log cabin church. After conducting the funeral Mass in Latin, the missionary was asked to accompany the family to bury the deceased — which he agreed to do. When the cars and hearse stopped, he had to help carry the casket up a hill to the burial site. When they got to the top, the family asked the missionary to fulfill one final request. When he agreed, they immediately opened the casket, stood it up, and took a picture of the missionary with the deceased.

This tale captured my imagination. I was intrigued by this place called Dungannon. A place different from where I grew up. A place where there were different ways of burying the bones.

When I graduated from high school, I joined a Catholic order, the Glenmary Home Mission Sisters of America, based in Cincinnati, Ohio. Four years later, I was sent to do missionary work in Big Stone Gap, Va., where I taught Bible school, did home visiting, prayed, and celebrated with my sisters.

At that time, I had forgotten I was on my way to Dungannon.

A Changing Church

In 1967, as the Catholic Church was changing, I served on a committee for the Glenmary Sisters that was created to suggest changes and improvements within our religious order. Our decisions, which included eliminating habits and allowing participatory decision making and creative prayer, weren't well received by the bishop. We were told that a monsignor would have to be appointed to guide us.

Subsequently, I left the order, along with 44 other Glenmary Sisters, and started a new non-profit organization called the Federation of Communities in Service (FOCIS). We were the first group of Catholic sisters ever to leave collectively in reaction to church policy. It was a daring departure. For me, however, it was more like a next step than a moving away. The purpose of our organization was (and still is) "to build a community of members that have the capacity of giving themselves in a life of dedication, service, and integration." And that is what we did, serving communities throughout Virginia, West Virginia, Ten-

nessee, and North Carolina. Since its creation, the organization has influenced over 100 community and social projects in the Appalachian region.

FOCIS members presently meet twice annually to reflect and celebrate. For one of these gatherings, I was named the Process Presider of Celebrations — a calling that has become an important aspect of my celebrant exploration.

Celebrant awareness

As I made my way to Dungannon, many events helped me to grow and become more aware of my celebrant role. In the late 1960s, I participated in a FOCIS research project in which I interviewed people from throughout Virginia and West Virginia, as well as Appalachians who had migrated to Chicago. One Appalachian was asked: What do you think it takes to live the good life these days? She responded, "Why, the Bible tells ya what's a good life ... and what ain't a good life, and then you make up your own mind!"

This kind of independent thinking was the polar opposite of my Catholic school training, which emphasized the institutional church. I was greatly impressed — and have since integrated this aspect of the Appalachian culture into my own journey. It was around this time that I became involved with the Council of Southern Mountains, the leading regional organization for helpers and change agents during the 1960s and 1970s. At these meetings, I learned about a new kind of celebrating that was inclusive, not tightly structured as in the Roman Catholic liturgy. Songs were sung, stories were told, and there was a desire to make the world a better place. I also became acquainted with Helen Lewis, who later became my friend and mentor. At that time, Helen was teaching at Clinch Valley College in Wise, Va. She eventually became director of the Appalachian Studies Program at Berea College in Kentucky.

In 1972, I went with Helen to look at a farm in Dungannon. At the same time, my former Glenmary sister superior and lifelong friend, Monica Kelly Appleby — along with her husband and son — was living in Boston but also wanted to buy a farm in the mountains. Together with Helen, they purchased a farm and began developing an educational center.

For me, the steep roads with their deep gullies into the farm weren't that appealing. But Helen saw the beauty of the land, the river, the variety of plants and said, "This is the place." And I eventually joined them in their endeavor, building my own house. This is how I got to Dungannon on the Clinch River in the center of the Clinch Valley bioregion, one of the "last great places" as recently designated by the Nature Conservancy.

Gatherings at River Farm, while homes were being built and gardening and farming were attempted, taught me new methods of celebration. After a work project, there was good food, music, stories, and the nearby river for swimming. At times, I yearned for things to have more structure, but celebrations often came from what I thought was chaos, and eventually I learned to rest in the chaos, to trust the process.

New Celebrations

I married Dick Austin in 1975 in the sinkhole on Chestnut Ridge Farm, one farm up from River Farm. I had met Dick at a Council of Southern Mountains meeting and had reconnected with him in Charleston, W.Va., when I was working on my graduate degree in social work. A tweed-wearing man, Dick calls himself an environmental theologian and the farm where we live a "research farm in environmental ethics" or "a place where we learn from our mistakes."

Even before our marriage, he had decided to farm in Dungannon. So from this place, we traveled to other locations, which also influenced my call to be a celebrant. Six years ago, we went to Rio de Janeiro for a week after Christmas. On New Year's Eve, there was a festive gathering on Copacabana Beach at which over a million people gathered, forming many circles in the sand. Each group was led by a black woman, a celebrant dressed in white, before whom people came and knelt down to learn about the future.

Throughout the evening there were long lines at each circle. I watched with curiosity and delight as the beach filled. At about one hour into the new year, I decided to get in line and go before a woman celebrant. When it was my turn, I knelt down before her, and she lifted my arms up high in a gesture of celebration.

Margaret Gregg

Ann Leibig (front left) leads the 1993 In Praise of Mountain Women processional down to burn the basket of burdens.

Now as I search for what has supported me in my journey, I recognize that this gesture, this moment, was a confirmation of my call.

My Catholic upbringing, the morning Mass and feast day processions, first awakened my awareness of symbol and mystery in celebration. But it was living in Appalachia that helped me to make up my own mind, to work with others for a better world, to trust the process, and to value food, song, and story.

At times, I yearned for things to have more structure, but celebrations often came from what I thought was chaos, and eventually I learned to rest in the chaos, to trust the process.

In the 1990s, two events have given me the opportunity to express myself and mature as a celebrant: the Praise of Mountain Women Gatherings (which are staffed by Appalachian Women Empowered) and the 25th anniversary celebration of FOCIS.

I participated in the second Praise of Mountain Women event held in Cedar Lakes, W.Va., in May 1993. At this celebration, over 150 women from throughout the mountains gathered in small groups called Home Circles to share songs, stories, and "to celebrate the rising of women's spirit." I volunteered to lead the Sunday morning closure session as the Celebrant Process Presider — linking parts, watching for gaps, and responding to the moment.

The parade began, and the groups walked, singing, out of the assembly hall, down to the fire to burn the basket of burdens. (These were "burdens" the women had written down and wished to release.) From here, the parade crossed a small bridge and assembled to lower the flag. We then proceeded to the outdoor chapel to hear the words that had been collected throughout the weekend. After hearing the words, we blessed the bread in memory of all Baker Women. Then someone in the group called out, "Let's get in a circle," and, as Process Presider, I encouraged people to leave their seats and make a large circle. Simultaneously, women from each circle took bread from the common table to distribute in the large circle. As we ate the bread, someone said they wanted to lead the group in a spiraling hug. This led to a wonderful dance of hugging.

I later wrote in my journal: "In this gathering, I was affirmed as a woman who supported safety, as a woman who has given birth, as a woman who has grieved and learned how to close, say good-bye, say go, and as a woman of the FOCIS community."

A month later, at Cumberland Falls State Park, I attended the FOCIS Festival of Friends that drew over 90 members and friends to celebrate the organization's 25 years of existence. I again chose Sunday morning as the time I wanted to shape, which included the telling of my personal journey to Dungannon — "Anne Leibig's FOCIS Story or Remembering the Bones on the Way to Dungannon" — much as I am telling it here.

After my story, we celebrated the Eucharist together. I love its ancient elements of gathering, recognizing failures, requesting mercy, expressing faith, hearing the Word, responding through petitions, blessing and breaking the bread and wine, and sending forth to create community. The FOCIS community was familiar with the form and easily participated. It was a structured celebration where all could understand themselves as celebrants.

These events have allowed me to express myself as a celebrant. Even the act of writing this article has led me to reflect on the necessity of journeying, the necessity of being rooted in a place, and the necessity of gatherings that pause from routine.

I Am A Celebrant!

I have traveled from my birth place.
I cannot swallow the wafer whole
in this new place.
I have had to chew and
Make up my own mind.

I am a celebrant.
I live in Dungannon.
I gather with
FOCIS and the Women of the Mountains,
Celebrating,
Naming meaning,
Respectfully and with joy.

Anne Leibig of Dungannon, Va., is a member of the Federation of Communities in Service (FOCIS). As a licensed clinical social worker, she works as a psychotherapist in Abingdon and Wise, Va.

"She would . . . go, bonnetless, up the gentle hill across the pasture in the light of sundown, calling the hens as she went. She was keenly aware of the ceremony and aware of her figure rising out of the fluttering birds, of all moving together about her."

— Elizabeth Madox Roberts, *The Time of Man* (1926)

Reviews

The Hinterlands
A Mountain Tale in Three Parts
by Robert Morgan
Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill
P.O. Box 2225
Chapel Hill, N.C. 27515-2225
1994
$21.95 (hardback)

The three parts of Robert Morgan's lyrical tale are like three verses of a song. The first verse, "The Trace," is sung by Petal Jarvis Richards, who, in 1772, leaves her home in a western Carolina settlement to travel further westward "to the Holsten" with her homesteading husband. "And I thought from these two rocks and this fire, and these two people and the work of their hands, and the loving of their bodies, we'll build a family," she says.

And so they do. Petal's fierce love for her family allows her to endure fear, pain, the death of a loved one, and a shocking betrayal.

The second verse, "The Road," is sung by Petal's grandson, Solomon. A born engineer, Solomon is both stung and spurred when his father derides his fascination with moving the earth. "Because I was angry, and because I was guilty of bad thoughts, I seen everything shining and sharp. I seen my path swing out around the hill for the stream of feet. And I seen I would carve the earth for the use of the family, so not only Mama but generations would have the way to the spring."

He decides in 1816 to build a road through Douthat's Gap. The trick is how should the land be surveyed to determine the best route for the new road. He overhears a conversation that gives him an idea so outrageous, so hilarious that I won't spoil the reader's surprise by revealing it here. Suffice it to say that the idea leads him on a headlong journey that is so intense that this reader had to stop occasionally to rest, and so riveting that I couldn't bear to rest for long.

In the third verse, "The Turnpike," Solomon's son David continues the family urge to define pathways. In 1845, he builds a road to connect two mountains. This time, however, individual ambition and love of work for its own sake are thrown by the wayside as David is forced to work for unscrupulous developers. The wilderness is being cut away, not by the building of roads per se, but by speeding capitalist greed.

Symbols strew the characters' paths like notes on a musical staff. The symbolism is sometimes heavy-handed (Petal's cabin is beset by an insistent panther at the same time that she is giving birth to her first son) or cloying, as when her husband, with whom she has recently reconciled, gives her a branch of blooming witch hazel: "It's the last thing in the year that blooms. It blossoms when everything else has quit for the winter. Sometimes it throws its seeds on snow."

As the tale continues, Petal's verbal sweet tooth gives way to Solomon's honey mouth, then to David's money mouth through decidedly non-saccharine events.

Each character encounters a panther, each faces the threat of violation, either from the opposite sex — as in Petal's and Solomon's stories — or from the sheer rapacity of greedy developers, as in David's case. And each finds her or his progress checked by a thunderstorm of breathtaking beauty and power. It is during Solomon's storm that Morgan unleashes his most beautiful and powerful language: "Out in that storm I felt I was just an impulse, a desire to make a road, and to marry your Grandma. I was just an idea with a little fat stuck to it. Compared to the storm, and the rotting strength of time, I was nothing but my desire."

The deluge is not the only allusion to Noah. The urge to live two-by-two is what draws Petal from her parents' home. Solomon builds the road to prove himself worthy of Mary MacPherson. David must finish the turnpike in order to earn enough money to marry.

Morgan drew from his own family legends to write *Hinterlands*. This *roman à clef* (in Petal's case, *treble clef*) is a hymn to perseverance, a celebration of hard work, a family Bible of love.

— Laurene Scalf

Laurene Scalf is an actor and free-lance writer who lives in Louisville, Ky. She has served previously as assistant editor for Now & Then.

Jack in Two Worlds: Contemporary North American Tales and Their Tellers
edited by William Bernard McCarthy
Publications of the American Folklore Society, New Series
University of North Carolina Press
Chapel Hill and London
1994
$45 (hardback), $16.95 (paperback)

When the British and Scotch-Irish farmers emigrated to the Southern Appalachians, they brought their favorite girls, their favorite milking cows, their favorite sheep dogs, and their favorite folk hero — Jack.

In *Jack in Two Worlds,* the folk tradition of the Jack Tale is celebrated and examined through eight stories, transcribed from actual storytellers, and from eight enlightening essays written by leading folktale experts.

As explained in the preface by William Bernard McCarthy, "Once bitten, folklorists and storytellers alike find it hard to resist the Jack Tale." So it was in 1987 when McCarthy himself and Bill Ellis organized a panel on Jack for the 1987 American Folklore Society in Albuquerque. Folklorists and professional storytellers were brought together for this event "to share insights into this irresistible trickster." By the end of that session, all members agreed that the work they had done in bringing scholars and storytellers together must be preserved. Under the general editorship of Bill Ellis, work began on *Jack in Two Worlds* with Bill McCarthy, Carl Lindahl, Joseph Sobol, and Ken Thigpen.

The two worlds in the book's title refer to two different concepts presented in the text. The first concept refers to two primary types of tellers: traditional Appalachian tale tellers, particularly those who are part of the Hicks-Harmon Jack Tale tradition, and the Jack Tale revivalists who attempt to "maintain and revitalize folk tradition." For this latter group, entertainment is a primary objective. For instance, Ed Stivender is an urban, Pennsylvania teller who often shares stories with

college audiences. He has been known to modernize tales, such as "Jack and the Animals," by adding characters — Miz Cat, Mr. Dog, and "mean bike robbers."

The second concept of the "two worlds" refers to a comparison of the British Jack and the American Jack. Both traditions, for example, preserve some tales for adult audiences only. But here is where the British Jack and American Jack part company. In European Jack Tales, "the typical Märchen (short tale) presents a tension between home and the road." The tale begins in a quiet, unremarkable place, and then opens to a magic world. By "taking to the road to make his fortune, the hero finds more magic the farther he travels from home."

Folklorist Linda Degh has suggested that European Märchen tellers were "travelers by profession and inclination." The heroes, like their narrators, were wanderers through the world — tinkers, soldiers, woodmen, and migrating farmworkers. "Representing himself as an emissary from the magic world of the open road" and a traveler himself, his audience often felt he was "indeed closer to the magic than they were."

However, this was not the case in the New World: "Ironically, it was in America — that archetypically mobile society — that the Märchen quit the road and settled down."

For early Americans, storytelling was not necessarily performance-oriented. Folks quietly listened to stories around a fireplace, possibly while doing chores — quilting, wool carding, or basket weaving. A level of understatement existed in this traditional British-American oral art. The Märchen tellers that folklorist Carl Lindahl has met in his American fieldwork come from "little traditions" — that is, the stories have been passed primarily through mothers and grandmothers to their children and grandchildren.

The use of magic is another differing area. In the British, Jack wields the magic himself; in the American, however, the magic is wielded against Jack. The final major difference is that British Jack is "every man" and always subject to a sovereign, whereas American Jack is an individual, the equal of any man on the frontier.

For anyone who celebrates the Jack Tale tradition in southern Appalachia and elsewhere, *Jack in Two Worlds* is a must. Although the essays are scholarly in nature, a number of fascinating facts about the irresistible trickster, the traditions, and the tellers may be gleaned. The stories themselves would amuse most readers of Jack Tales and folktales in general, although parental discretion may be advised in the case of Ray Hicks's "Hardy Hard-Ass" and Marshall Ward's "Jack in the Lion's Den." For the love of learning and of Appalachian folktales, celebrate the tradition of the Jack Tale by reading *Jack in Two Worlds.*

— Ginger Renner

Ginger Renner has a master's degree in English from East Tennessee State University. She is currently working toward a graduate degree in storytelling. She lives in Johnson City, Tenn., with her husband, Fred Waage, and their children, Melissa and Erick.

The Picture Man: Photographs by Paul Buchanan

edited by Ann Hawthorne

The University of North Carolina Press
P. O. Box 2288
Chapel Hill, N.C. 27515-2288
1993
$12.95 (paper), $24.95 (hardback)

The Picture Man is a small volume of portraits taken by photographer Paul Buchanan that depict rural life in Mitchell County, N.C., during the 1930s and 1940s. Besides photographs, the book contains a lively interview that Ann Hawthorne conducted with Buchanan in 1986. Hawthorne, a Washington, D.C., photographer, is the book's editor and the person responsible for restoring Buchanan's negatives and having them printed. Also included in the text is a brief introduction, which discusses the photographs' cultural value, written by veteran television news correspondent Bruce Morton.

It is from Hawthorne's interview, however, that we get interesting background information about Buchanan himself — most important, that he learned his craft from his father (who was also an itinerant photographer) and that he practiced it on and off for more than 20 years. Buchanan also farmed and did an assortment of odd jobs (mica mining and saw milling). Remarkably, he spent his early years in the business soliciting clients by going door to door and from county to county on foot. He was a practical businessman who accepted many forms of payment (e.g.,

Ann Hawthorne

Paul Buchanan, the "Picture Man."

rabbits and jars) and who knew instinctively how to please his customers. He would wait (impatiently) until they dressed up and tried not to get them blinking.

Buchanan's pictures are, like their maker, straightforward, informative, and unpretentious. They are black and white, mostly vertical and frontal, and usually lit with a diffused northern light found somewhere around the subject's house. Most were taken at a sufficient distance to include entire figures, either standing or seated in groups. However, there is absolutely nothing extraordinary about the work; in fact, Buchanan stated it succinctly himself by calling his portraits "good and plain" — just as his customers wanted them. Yet the work is interesting.

I agree with Bruce Morton's introductory remarks that describe Buchanan's work as a clean photographic reference to the way mountain people viewed themselves. Buchanan did this precisely and consistently by allowing the medium to work its magic, rendering his subjects without artifice and using little artistic license. The subjects were seated in the most logical way, in an appropriate light, and framed so that cropping (they all are contact prints) wasn't required. Buchanan always took enough exposures so that, if "finished" properly, they would be worth either a sale or a fair trade.

Hawthorne's editing is purposeful, with the photographic selections aptly suggesting Buchanan's gifts and limitations. She provides enough work to give the reader a solid idea of the photographer's breadth and scope, as well as many interesting and charming subjects to view. In one picture, for example, a farmer proudly poses with his sow and her brood of nine piglets. Another depicts a young man, perhaps a schoolmaster, who is sinisterly balancing a child's chair on its front legs with his fingertips. The chair teeters precariously beneath the pressure of a single extended finger. His sallow face with its stern expression, his rigid stance, and his creepy fingers make one wonder what brand of torture it might have been to spend even a single day under his tutelage.

The photos include many examples of domestic contentment and pride — husbands clutch wives, newlyweds beam, mothers and fathers affectionately display their children. Livestock, rabbits, coons, acoustic guitars, guns, crops, and trucks are featured prominently throughout, attesting to aspects of mountain life these people knew, understood, and relied upon. The only missing element is a Bible. Most important, the selections offer enough so that each viewing is likely to provide some new detail, faint gesture, or fact to ponder.

Buchanan is not a master of the medium of photography as expressive art. However, he was among those faithful practitioners who, by virtue of their trust in the medium's ability to accurately describe a subject, created a viable and substantive body of work — one that serves to remind, instruct, and reward its viewers.

— Mike Smith

Mike Smith teaches photography at East Tennessee State University in Johnson City, Tenn., and has been photographing the local region since 1981. He received a Tennessee Arts Commission Artists Fellowship for 1994-95 and has been a Center fellow. His work is displayed at the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

Idol and Sanctuary

by Victor M. Depta
University Editions Inc.
59 Oak Lane, Spring Valley
Huntington, W.Va. 25704
1993
$9 (paperback)

Idol and Sanctuary is the fictional story of Keith, a West Virginia youth who, in 1957, is on the verge of manhood. When the tale begins, Keith plans to join the Navy. As the action unfolds, however, these plans are variously challenged, verified, changed drastically, and then, in the end, left totally undecided.

Keith is portrayed as a person of scruples, trapped in unfortunate circumstances. Having been abandoned by his parents, he is forced to live with his Aunt Margie and her husband John. He attends a small church, where he is seen by some members of the congregation as a future leader and by others as just another low-class, coal miner's kid. His friends are an assortment of outcasts, sinners, and others who have little to offer. Sadly, most of them want things from Keith that he isn't comfortable or capable of providing. In the midst of these expectations, Keith is a thinker, a quiet boy who wants more than a dying coal town can provide.

The events on the church grounds provide the backdrop for the book's title. Keith works single-handedly in the last half of the book to clean the church premises of excess brush and grass. It is during this process that he, in a shed behind the sanctuary, has his first sexual encounter with a woman, an experience the author compares to the bringing of idols onto sacred ground. It represents, in fact, a desecration of the very place Keith has worked to clean and make holy. Unfortunately, Depta, the author, does not adequately develop this metaphor in the remainder of the book. This inconsistency is also mirrored in other aspects of the story; the characters participate in rituals, for example, and claim to have beliefs that could give their dwindling coal-town lives meaning, but they never take full advantage of that reality. In essence, the story becomes a sad commentary on the spiritual poverty of American, and specifically Appalachian, culture.

This book was published by a small press in West Virginia, the author's home state. There are several sections, including the all-important first sentence, that need rewriting; however, the plot has enough turns to keep the reader involved and interested in the story's characters. There are also several accounts of sexual episodes, including Keith's rape by his aunt's husband, his encounter with a male acquaintance, and his witnessing of a homosexual rape. These encounters are all graphically described, which, at times, helps the reader understand Keith and his struggles; at other times, however, they tend to distract and, frankly, sicken the reader.

Having witnessed the traumas of Keith's life, especially the rape by his uncle, this reader can't help but wonder why Keith hasn't been more drastically affected. There appears to have been little damage done to his psyche — and, at the

same time, little personal growth achieved.

In spite of these considerations, *Idol and Sanctuary* is a revealing study of the experiences of an Appalachian boy whose values seem strong, but whose roots do not run deep. Although loved by several members of his family, Keith still feels alone. Although he is perceived by many as a devoted church-goer, even a leader, he is unsure that God even exists. He dreams of joining the Navy but only to escape his circumstances. By the end, the reader isn't sure what Keith has learned, even though his sanctuary has been cleared and some of his idols destroyed. From this perspective, perhaps the book is meant as nothing more than a sad commentary on the life of an Appalachian youth.

— Brian West

Brian West is a student at Emmanuel School of Religion in Johnson City, Tenn., where he is working toward a master of divinity degree. He holds a bachelor of arts in humanities from Milligan College.

Homemade Tales: Songs and Sayings of Florida Slone

a video directed by Anthony Slone and Angelyn DeBord

produced by Appalshop Films
306 Madison St.
Whitesburg, Ky. 41858
1-800-545-7467
1993
$150 VHS format

Although a video, *Homemade Tales* could be called a praise poem to mountain life — and to a particular mountain woman. Through it, we learn about the life and times of Florida Slone, a woman living in Knott County, Ky., who celebrates the commonplace through her songs and stories. Flowers, bees, memories, playing bingo, her children, and living the mountain life are subjects about which she talks and sings.

As a child, Slone was a victim of typhoid fever — an occurrence that retarded her development but also shaped her life. She recalls being embarrassed that her siblings could talk "pretty and plain," while she could not. She speaks of the power of dreams — and of how she was given a song and the gift of making music. Her tunes, she says, are made up as she goes along but always rooted in the Christian faith.

Much of the video is shot outdoors, in places where Florida lives and walks, and the mountain scenes are breathtaking. Clearly, it is Slone's home that sustains and feeds her creative spirit. Through her descriptions, one gets a sense that time and space are measured differently in those peaks and valleys — "up in the Pippa Pass" and "down by Caney Branch."

Slone talks and sings about meeting her husband and of how he learned to read by studying his children's school books. And she tells how she learned to drive a car after the age of 60 — an event about which she later wrote a song. Slone's son, Anthony, and her daughter-in-law, Angie DeBord, have performed a service by documenting the life of this talented Kentucky woman who is anything but ordinary.

— Adora L. Dupree

Adora Dupree holds a master's degree in storytelling from East Tennessee State University. She lives in Johnson City, Tenn., and works as a professional storyteller.

The Graduate

he glides home, degree in hand.
rolling the road, he seeks the scent of river. on
paper he has succeeded, done the family proud. but
he would sit along the water's edge, scooping trout,
tying knots in the ends of lines, watching his father
throw and reel, bend and wait, thinking
of a friend he once knew who drove off to college
and never returned to tie on the apron,
shove on the steel-toed shoes,
uniform of the old man's mill.

— Melinda Szafran

Melinda Szafran lives in Menlo Park, Calif., and writes fiction and poetry for various markets.

Down the Road, In the Backseat, With the Band

What do you want to know about us 'baccer chewing people from Sevierville, Tenn.?

Celebrating the life and times of Fiddlin' Benny Sims

For about half a century now, the music of Benny Sims has filled the airways and been a part of the world of bluegrass. Considered one of the original pioneers, Sims' superb fiddling can be heard on the Flatt and Scruggs hit, "Foggy Mountain Breakdown," and his vocalizing on their popular song, "Salty Dog Blues."

The roots of his career can be traced to Sevierville, Tenn., where he learned to play the fiddle from his father and an uncle, an itinerant musician. Sims said of him: "He (the uncle) had a good musical knowledge. As long as he lived, he lectured me on certain things. He'd always be asking me questions that I couldn't answer (about the fiddle)."

When Sims was a teenager, medicine shows frequently came through town, bringing with them a parade of old-time musicians — including Wade Mainer, Jack and Curly Shelton, and Zeke and Wiley Morris. By that time, Sims said, "I just wanted to play, it didn't matter (what)."

In 1947, after serving in the military, Sims took his first professional job with a band called the Blue Ridge Hillbillies. Besides Sims, Tommy Millard, Red Smiley, and J.P. Sauceman made up the group. It was two years later that Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs needed a fiddler for a Florida tour sponsored by Mercury Records. Sims, of course, was there to fit the bill.

"I made that trip with them," explained Sims, "and ended up staying three years. We cut 20 some sides for Mercury (Records) in Tampa one night. We backed up against the wall and went to it. Flatt and Scruggs were offered a contract with Columbia Records, but they couldn't sign with them until they completed their quota with Mercury. We cut them, not thinking they would be standard stock for that kind of music. We did 'Salty Dog Blues,' 'Pike County Breakdown,' 'Cora Is Gone,' 'Take Me In My Lifeboat.' I can't remember them all.

"Most of the things I did with Flatt and Scruggs didn't seem to sink in with the public until later on, after I'd left them — not until the *Bonnie and Clyde* theme. The movie producers gave us royalties on that.

"After Flatt and Scruggs, I come to WNOX for the *Mid-Day Merry-Go-Round*, a very popular radio show. Lowell Blanchard ramrodded the show. People would have given their right arm for that job. We did a noon broadcast, then played a show somewhere every night. We would travel as far as 200 miles.

"I left WNOX in 1955 and came to Johnson City, Tenn., to work with Bonnie Lou and Buster Moore. TV was coming in. Charlotte was the closest television station, so we couldn't do nothing wrong. We also traveled around doing shows.

"In the early '60s, things were going through a change. When (Elvis) Presley came on the scene, it seemed we had maybe run our course. I worked later with Jim and Jesse McReynolds, and we played the Opry every Saturday night. We were based out of Montgomery, Ala.; 1961, I think it was. We played Montgomery, then Albany, Ga. We cut TV there on Monday night; Pensacola, Fla., Tuesday night; Jackson, Miss., Wednesday; and back into Montgomery on Thursday."

Sims moved back to East Tennessee in the mid-1960s and for the past 30 years has taught fiddle on Saturdays. He presently lives in Johnson City, Tenn., with his wife Eula. Said Sims, "Fiddlin' Steve Ledford from Bakersville, N.C., I used to see early on at some of those medicine shows. I have one of his great nieces for a student now."

— Ed Snodderly

Benny Sims (with hat) posed with fellow musicians "Harper" (far left), Hoke Jenkins, and Carl Smith, following a radio broadcast of the Western North Carolina Farm Show on WWNC in Asheville, N.C., circa 1948.

Stars and Bars

He's a boy alone walking
in blue jean jacket
with the stars and bars
sewn boldly on the back.
He's tough and lean at 16
striving to be seen.

He looks at a tractor trailer,
the back of a pickup truck,
store windows, private homes,
pictures, buttons, a coffee cup —
all fly the Confederacy
as though it were a dare.

How many bodies can
the boy carry on his back?
How many fatherless homes
fit in the trailer of that rig?
How many lost dreams spill
out the back of a pickup?

129 years ago he lost
a million men and boys.
He divided families
and swore not to forgive.
Yet here he stands, making
fashion statements to the dead.

He raises the flag at flea marts
and chants the child's refrain
"Save all your Dixie cups, for
the South shall rise again."
He pits butternut against the blue
mocking battles he never knew.

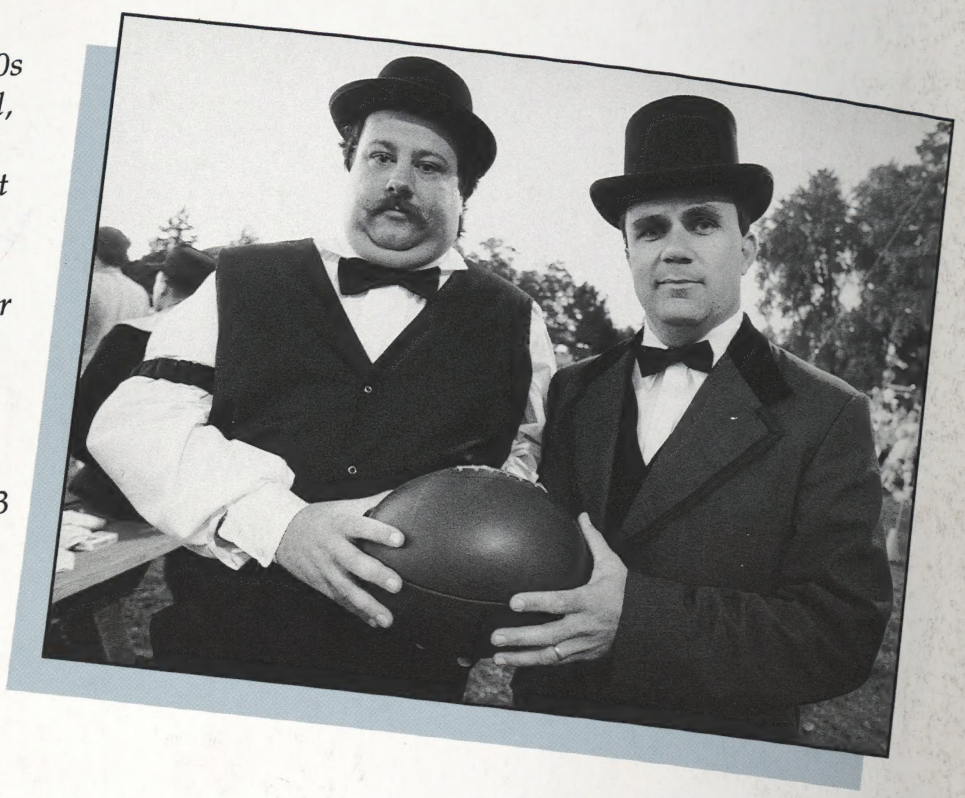
He creates a liturgy
of ancestral guilt
confessing, like Adam and Eve
longing for Paradise,
to a war he doesn't understand
and purposely refuses to forget.

—Michael Hughes

Michael Hughes comes from a large family whose roots run deep in West Virginia. He began writing in high school and currently lives in Romney, W.Va., with his wife Janet.

Provocative Tales of Celebrations in Appalachia

Two referees posed at last year's 1890s Fabulous Weekend held in Mansfield, Penn. The event featured a reenactment of the world's first night football game, originally played in September 1892. Other activities included a motorless parade, a hot air balloon rally, and an old-time tent revival. For background about the event, see "Prognosticators, Slugburgers, and Other Tales of Appalachian Celebrations" on page 3 of this issue of Now & Then.



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Coming up:

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The Environment

Summer 1995
Music

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